AN
EASY INTRODUCTION
TO
ASTRONOMY,
FOR
YOUNG GENTLEMEN and LADIES.

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AN EASY

INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY,

FOR

YOUNG GENTLEMEN and LADIES:

DESCRIBING

The Figure, Motions, and Dimenſions of the Earth; the
different Seaſons; Gravity and Light; the Solar Syſtem;
the Tranſit of Venus, and its Uſe in Aſtronomy; the
Moon's Motion and Phaſes; the Eclipſes of the
Sun and Moon; the Cauſe of the Ebbing and
Flowing of the Sea, &c.

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By JAMES FERGUSON, F.R.S.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
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Advertiſement.

THE deſign of the following Treatiſe is to ſhew, that Young Gentlemen and Ladies may acquire a competent knowledge of Aſtronomy, without any previous knowledge of Geometry or Mathematics. How far the Author has ſucceeded in this, is left to the judgment and deciſion of his impartial Readers; to whom if his labours be agreeable and inſtructive, the purpoſe for which he wrote will be fully anſwered.

CONTENTS.

Dialogue Page

I. *ON the Motion, Figure, and Dimenſions of the Earth* - 1

II. *On the Balance of Nature, and the Solar Syſtem* - - 30

III. *On Gravity and Light* - - 57

IV. *On the Tranſit of Venus, June 6th,* 1761; *and how the Diſtances of the Planets from the Sun were found thereby* - - 86

V. *On the Method of finding the Latitudes and Longitudes of Places* 105

VI. *On the Cauſes of the different Lengths of Days and Nights, the Viciſſitudes of Seaſons, and the various Phaſes of the Moon* - - - 130

VII. *On the Moon's Motion round the Earth and Sun, and the Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon* - - 156

VIII. *On the Cauſe of the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea* - - 185

IX. *On the Fixed Stars, and Solar and Sydereal Time* - - - 206

X. *On the Projection of Solar Eclipſes: To which are ſubjoined, Anſwers to ſome Aſtronomical Queſtions* - 216

DIRECTIONS to the BINDER.

All the Plates are to be opened toward the Left Hand, and to be placed as follows:

Plate I. - -	fronting Page 23
II. - - -	61
III. - - -	87
IV. - - -	135
V. - - -	163
VI. - - -	185
VII. - - -	225

THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN AND LADY'S ASTRONOMY.

DIALOGUE I.

On the MOTION, FIGURE, *and* DIMENSIONS *of the* EARTH.

Neander.

GOOD morrow, ſiſter; this is an early viſit.—I have thought, for theſe few days ſince I came home, that you are anxious about ſomething or other. Pray, may I aſk what it is?

Eudoſia. Indeed, brother, I am,—but am almoſt afraid to tell you what it is.

N. Then you muſt think me much changed ſince I went to Cambridge. You know I always loved and eſteemed you, on account of the goodneſs of your heart, which ſhone forth with the greateſt luſtre in the whole of your deportment.—I am ſtill the ſame as before, excepting the improvement I have made at that famous univerſity; where, not only the ſublime ſciences are taught by the greateſt maſters, but the truths of the Chriſtian religion proved in the lectures which I have conſtantly attended.—You know that you and I uſed to converſe familiarly before I went thither: let us do ſo ſtill.

E. Dear brother, I cannot expreſs how much you oblige me by this behaviour.—I was afraid before to tell you my mind; but now I will, eſpecially as you are to be here for ſome conſiderable time before you ſet out upon your travels. What I want to learn of you cannot be done, I believe, without taking up a great deal of your time; and perhaps you may think me too vain, in wanting to know what the bulk of mankind think our ſex have no buſineſs with.

N. Pray, EUDOSIA, what is that?

E. It is nothing leſs than to be in ſome meaſure acquainted with the ſublime ſcience of Aſtronomy; for I have been told, that of all others, it is the beſt for enlarging our minds, and filling them with the moſt noble ideas of the GREAT CREATOR and his works; and conſequently of drawing us nearer to Him, with an humble ſenſe of our own meanneſs, and of every thing that the greateſt art of man can perform.

N. Indeed, ſiſter, whoever told you ſo, told you a great truth; and I am very glad to find you have an inclination to learn the moſt ſublime ſcience that ever was taught by mankind.

E. But ſhall I not be laughed at for attempting to learn what men ſay is fit only for *men* to know?

N. Never, by any man who thinks right; and I hope you are above minding what thoſe ſay who think wrong.

E. Now, let me ſpeak freely.—I have been told, aſtronomers pretend that the ſun ſtands ſtill, and that the earth turns round. What do you ſay to this?—I know you honour the Bible, and it aſſerts the contrary. Now, I ſee ſo many things in that Book which appear to me to be above all the powers of human compoſition, and carry ſuch evident marks of Divinity with them, as are ſufficient to convince me that they could proceed from none but God: and therefore I had much rather baulk all my inclinations to learning, than learn any thing that would prejudice my mind againſt the Bible.

N. Dear ſiſter, I admire the goodneſs of your heart.—You may depend upon it, that the ſtudy of aſtronomy will never have the leaſt tendency towards prejudicing your mind againſt the Scriptures.—You know that we cannot take every thing there in the ſtrict literal ſenſe. If we did, we ſhould believe that Our Saviour was actually a vine at one time, a door at another, and at a third time a lamb. The Scriptures were given us, to teach us what we ſhould believe, and how we ſhould behave, in order to attain and ſecure to ourſelves the favour of our Maker here, and our perpetual felicity hereafter; which are things infinitely more intereſting to us than all other knowledge and wealth in the world. —They ſpeak according to the common apprehenſions of mankind, in thoſe points which are merely ſpeculative, and have no direct tendency to influence our morals; and, as they never were intended to inſtruct us in experimental philoſophy, or aſtronomy, or in any thing elſe that we could acquire by our own induſtry without them, nothing that regards theſe ſciences can either be deduced or inferred from them.—One might with as good reaſon take up a law-book and expect to find a ſyſtem of geography in it, as take up the Bible with a view to find a ſyſtem of aſtronomy therein.

E. What you have ſaid is rational and juſt; and now, if you pleaſe, I ſhould be glad to enter upon our intended ſubject.—If the ſun does not move, pray, to what is he fixed? and what hinders him from falling down to the earth, when he is ſo high above it, eſpecially at noon in ſummer?

N. *High* and *low* are only relative terms; for, when the ſun is at his loweſt depreſſion with reſpect to us, he is directly over-head to ſome other part of the earth; for the earth is round like a globe, and on whatever part of its ſurface a perſon ſtands upright, he thinks himſelf to be on the uppermoſt ſide, and wonders how any one can ſtand directly oppoſite to him, on the undermoſt ſide of the earth; or rather, how he can hang to it, with his head downward, and not fall off to the lower ſky.

E. That is what I have often wondered at, when I have heard it affirmed that the earth is habitable on all ſides; or that, where towns cannot be built, ſhips may ſail. How comes it to paſs, that the weight of a ſhip cauſeth it not to fall off from the lower ſeas; or that theſe ſhips and ſeas do not fall off to the lower ſky altogether?

N. What we call *weight* is cauſed by *attraction.*—The earth attracts all bodies on or near its ſurface, towards its center, equally on all ſides, every particle of matter alike; and therefore thoſe bodies which contain the greateſt number of particles of matter, acquire from this attraction the greateſt and moſt forcible preſſure; and conſequently have (what we call) the greateſt weight.—The earth may be compared to a great round loadſtone rolled in filings of iron, which attracts equally on all ſides; ſo that they cannot fall off even from its undermoſt ſide: nay, it will take them up from a table, if they be within the ſphere of its attraction.—By and by, you ſhall be ſatisfied with reſpect to your query about the ſun.

E. So far I underſtand you very well; but ſtill it ſeems odd to me, that people ſhould ſtand oppoſite to us on the earth, with their heads downward.

N. I believe it does; but you know, that either the ſun muſt go round the earth to give us days and nights, or the earth muſt turn round like a globe on its axis to do ſo; and will not either of theſe motions anſwer the intended purpoſe?

E. Undoubtedly it will.

N. Now, as I have no mind to deceive you, and ſhall in due time prove every thing that I advance, even to your own ſatisfaction; I do ſay, that the ſun does not move round the earth every twenty-four hours, but that the earth turns round in twenty-four hours: and as the ſun can only enlighten one half of the earth at any given inſtant of time, and the other half muſt then be in the dark; this motion of the earth will cauſe the different places on its ſurface to revolve through the light and the dark in twenty-four hours; in which time, of courſe, they muſt have a day and a night: and at the inſtant when it is mid-day at one place, it muſt be midnight at the oppoſite.—Do you believe what I ſay with reſpect to the earth's turning round?

E. I do, becauſe I am fully ſatisfied that you would not willingly deceive me; and you have promiſed to prove that it does.

N. Then, be pleaſed to ſtand up for a minute.——It is now ſeven o'clock in the morning, and you think you are ſtanding upright, on the uppermoſt ſide of the earth.—You will think the ſame if you ſtand upright at ſeven o'clock in the evening, when the earth has turned half round, becauſe you will then perceive no difference of poſture: and yet, at that time, you will be very nearly in the ſame poſition as a perſon is juſt now, who ſtands on the ſide of the earth oppoſite to us: which perſon being as ſtrongly attracted by the earth there, towards its center, as we are here, he is in no more danger of falling off downward, than we are at preſent of falling upward.

E. Pardon me, ſir; if you had not been at the univerſity, I ſhould have thought *falling upward* a very improper expreſſion.

N. So it is; and I do aſſure you that I never heard ſuch an expreſſion at the univerſity, nor do I ever remember to have uſed it before.—But, to proceed.

Up and *down* are only relative terms. Let us be on what part of the earth we will, we call it *up* toward the ſky over our heads; and *down* toward the center of the earth, to which all terreſtrial bodies would fall, by the power of the earth's attraction. So that, with regard to open ſpace, what is *up* from any given point of the earth's ſurface, is *down* from the oppoſite point thereof. And as the ſky ſurrounds the whole earth, we call it *up* toward the ſky over our heads, be where we will; and *down* from our place toward the center of the earth.

E. Then, to be ſure, we can perceive no difference, as to our poſition at different times of the day. You have quite ſatisfied me in this: but, pray, how can the earth move, and we not feel its motion?

N. I heard you was at Plymouth laſt year; had you not then the curioſity to go aboard ſome of the ſhips there, or at the Dock?

E. My papa and I went to the Dock, with a ſmall party of gentlemen and ladies. Mr. *Falconer*, who was then maſter of the Belleiſle, happened to be on ſhore; and obſerving that we were ſtrangers, he moſt politely invited us to ſee his ſhip, which was then lying with many others in the Hamoaze. We moſt willingly accepted his invitation, and he took us all out in his boat; ſhewed us firſt into the cabin of the ſhip, and, as it was in the afternoon, he genteelly treated the gentlemen with wine, and the ladies with tea; after which, he ſhewed us the whole inſide of his ſhip of war. The way that the different apartments are laid out, eſpecially the powder-magazine, and how it is ſecured from being dangerous; the method of ſteering the helm, and many other things which I cannot well remember, was a ſight not only highly entertaining, but greatly ſurpriſing; and I could not help wondering how it was poſſible for the art of man to contrive and build ſuch a wondrous huge machine, and how it could be managed and conducted through the pathleſs ſeas.

N. It is ſurpriſing indeed! but how infinitely more ſo is the power and ſkill of the GREAT CREATOR of the univerſe, who has made ſuch prodigious bodies as the planets of our ſyſtem are (one of which is a thouſand times as big as our earth), and has ſet them off in the trackleſs ſpace around us, with ſuch degrees of ſwiftneſs as you will be amazed to hear of; and yet, at the end of each circuit, they begin the ſame over again, at the ſame parts of ſpace from which he ſet them off at firſt.——And the diſpoſition of all the apartments of the ſhip will not bear to be compared, not only with the ſtructure of the human body, but even with that of the meaneſt animal on earth—Was the day calm or windy?

E. Scarce a breath of wind was ſtirring: the ſun ſhone clear, which made the ſurface of the water around us have a very pleaſing aſpect: and the ſight of the ſhips about us, and of the town, was a moſt beautiful proſpect.

N. I ſuppoſe you looked out through the cabin windows whilſt you were at tea.—Did you ſee the ſame objects all the while?

E. I looked out very often; the firſt object I ſaw was a large houſe in the Dock-town; but it ſeemed to me as if it moved very ſlowly toward the right-hand. I ſoon loſt ſight of it, and other objects appeared to my view, and diſappeared ſlowly and gradually; which could ariſe from no other cauſe than the very ſlow and gentle turning of the ſhip the contrary way.

N. True; but did you feel the motion of the ſhip?

E. Not in the leaſt; and the whole company agreed, that if we had not looked out, we ſhould not have thought that the ſhip had any motion at that time.

N. And is not *that ſingle caſe* ſufficient to convince you, that the earth may turn round, and carry us all about with it, and we feel nothing of its motion? eſpecially as the motion of the earth is much more regular and uniform than the motion of a ſhip, or any other machine that human art can contrive.

E. I confeſs it is.—But if the earth turns round, how comes it to paſs that a ſtone thrown directly upward, falls down again, upon the very ſame place of the earth from which it was thrown up?—— For, conſidering how large a globe the earth is, the parts of its ſurface muſt move very faſt, to turn round once every twenty-four hours. And if it turns at all, its motion muſt be eaſtward; becauſe the ſun, moon, and ſtars appear to move from Eaſt to Weſt. Now, I ſhould imagine, that a ſtone or ball thrown directly upward from any place, would fall as far to the weſtward of that place, as the place itſelf has got to the eaſtward, whilſt the ſtone was diſengaged from the earth, and riſing and falling in the ſame line.

N. Your obſervation is very ſenſible.—But you ought to conſider, that any body which is put into motion will perſevere in that motion till ſomething or other turns it aſide, or ſtops its courſe. The ſtone partook of the earth's motion before it was diſengaged therefrom: the perſon who took it up had the ſame motion, by which means it was ſtill communicated to the ſtone; and therefore its motion was as quick eaſtward while it was riſing and falling in the open air, as the earth's motion is: ſo that it could not miſs falling down again upon the ſame part of the earth. And although it would have appeared to a ſpectator to aſcend and deſcend in the ſame perpendular line, yet its real motion was in a curve, and would manifeſtly have appeared ſo to an obſerver at reſt in the open air, on whom the earth's motion had no effect.

If a large boat were ſailing along, near the ſhore, two perſons oppoſite to one another in the boat might toſs a ball to each other, over and over acroſs the boat, to catch for their diverſion, and they would imagine it to be only going to and fro, from one perſon to the oppoſite, always in the ſame line; whereas it is certain, that the progreſſive motion of the ball, going from one ſide to the other, would be equal to the progreſſive motion of the boat; for if it were not, the oppoſite perſon (who had a progreſſive motion) could not catch it. And although it would appear to all the people in the boat, to move forward and backward in the ſame line, yet, to an obſerver on the ſhore, who is no way affected by the motion of the boat, the ball would be ſeen to have a zigzag motion, never returning to either perſon in the ſame line in which he toſſed it toward the other.

E. You have fully convinced me, that there is nothing concluſive in my argument againſt the earth's motion.——And, in confirmation of what you ſaid about a body's being put in motion, that it will naturally perſevere therein, till ſome cauſe or other turns it aſide, or ſtops its courſe, I had once the experience thereof; and very painful it was. For, croſſing our river in the boat, I ſtood up when it was about half way over; and as its motion was uniform by the men pulling the rope I was quite inſenſible both of its motion and my own. But when it ſtopt ſuddenly againſt the bank of the river, I fell forward on my face, and was much hurt by the fall. Whereas, if I had not, without knowing any thing of the matter, naturally perſevered in the motion given me by the boat, I could not have fallen when it was ſtopt.

N. Indeed, Eudosia, you have given a true philoſophical account of the cauſe of your falling: and now, I think, we may, for the preſent, have done talking of this matter.

E. I think ſo too; for, ſpeaking of the fall makes me almoſt imagine I ſtill feel it.—But, pray, how do you prove that the earth is round like a globe?

N. I will prove *that* immediately. The ſun ſhines in through the window—

E. What then?

N. Have patience a minute, and look at *this* ſmall globe in my hand, and the flat circular plate that lies on the table.—You ſee the globe may be hung by the thread which is faſtened to it. I now twiſt the thread, and hang the globe by it in the beams of the ſun; and the globe caſts a ſhadow on *that* upright board behind it. You ſee that the globe turns by the untwiſting of the thread; but let it turn how it will, it always caſts as round a ſhadow on the board as if it did not turn at all.—I now fix a thread to the edge of the flat circular plate, and hang the plate by the thread a little twiſted. You ſee, that when the broad-ſide of the plate faces the ſun, it caſts a round ſhadow on the board, as the globe did: but as it turns obliquely toward the ſun, by the untwiſting of the thread, its ſhadow is of an oval figure on the board; and when its edge is turned toward the ſun, its ſhadow on the board is only a narrow ſtraight line.

E. All this is plain; but I cannot imagine what you are to infer from it.

N. The earth always caſts a ſhadow toward that part of the heaven which is oppoſite to the ſun; and the moon appears as flat to us as the board on which the ſhadow of the ſmall globe was projected. When the earth's ſhadow falls upon the moon, we ſay, *the moon is eclipſed.* Theſe eclipſes happen at all different times of the twenty-four hours; and, conſequently, when all the different ſides of the earth are ſucceſſively turned toward the ſun. But the earth's ſhadow on the moon is always bounded by a circular line; and therefore it is plain, that the earth muſt be of a globular ſhape.—For, if it were ſhaped like *this* flat circular plate, its ſhadow on the moon could never be circular but when its broad-ſide was turned directly toward the ſun. At other times, the ſhadow would be either of an oval figure, or only a ſtraight line, as you have ſeen on the board. There are ſeveral other ways of proving that the earth is round; but I believe you are ſatisfied that it is ſo, from what I have now ſhewn you.

E. I am entirely ſatisfied, and therefore more proofs would be ſuperfluous. But I ſhould now be glad to know how you prove that the earth turns round; and that the ſun does not go round the earth.

N. Before I proceed to the demonſtration, I will aſk you a very plain queſtion, which I hope you will not take amiſs, as I have not the leaſt deſign to affront you.

E. Indeed I do not believe you have; and therefore I beg you will aſk it.

N. Suppoſe you put a ſmall bird on a ſpit, and put it to the fire; whether is it the beſt way to turn the ſpit round with the bird, or to let the ſpit ſtand ſtill, and move the fire round about it?

E. Your queſtion almoſt ſurpriſes me,—for, not to ſpeak of the wiſdom of *man*, ſure no *woman* of common ſenſe could be ſo abſurd, as to ſet about contriving how to make the large fire and grate be carried round the ſpit.

N. True, *Eudoſia.*——Now I can aſſure you, that the ſun is at leaſt a million of times as big as the earth; and is therefore more unfit to be moved round the earth, than a great fire, and the grate that holds it, is to be moved round a ſmall bird on a ſpit.—And as no *man* in his ſenſes would go to work on ſuch an abſurd attempt, would it not be horrid blaſphemy to ſuppoſe, that the DEITY, who is the very eſſence of wiſdom and perfection, would do ſo?

E. Heaven

E. Heaven forbid the thought! the bare mentioning ſuch a thing is enough to chill one's blood.——Were I ſure, that the ſun could be proved to be a million of times as big as the earth, I ſhould aſk no farther demonſtration of the ſtability of the ſun and the motion of the earth; becauſe I ſhould naturally conclude, that the ſun is a million of times more unfit to move than the earth is. And, as the moſt ſuperlative degree of wiſdom and reaſon is in the Deity, it is impoſſible for me to imagine he could do any thing that is irrational.——My belief is, that he always makes uſe of the feweſt, moſt ſimple, and moſt rational means, to produce the greateſt, moſt noble, and moſt aſtoniſhing effects; ſuch as his infinite goodneſs and beneficence to his creatures has rendered conducive to their welfare, in numberleſs inſtances.

N. He certainly does.—And now I will prove to you, that the earth turns round every twenty-four hours; not upon any material axis, but on an imaginary ſtraight line within itſelf, paſſing through its center, and terminating in its North and South points, which are called its *North* and *South poles*; as an orange would turn round in the open air, if you firſt ſet it a-whirling, and then throw it off your hand in the air.

Water naturally runs downward, all around the earth, from theſe parts which are higheſt, or fartheſt from the center, towards thoſe which are loweſt, or neareſt to it: and this is cauſed by the power of the earth's central attraction, which draws the water and all other bodies that way. Now, if the earth was perfectly round, and ſmooth like a poliſhed globe, all the parts of its ſurface would be equidiſtant from its center, and water could never run upon it. About three-fourth parts of the earth's ſurface is covered mith the ſeas, which join or communicate with each other. And if the earth had no motion round its axis or center, the attractive force (which is equal all around at equal diſtances from the center) would cauſe the ſurface of the ſeas to be of a perfectly round and globular form.

E. Undoubtedly it would: for then, as every particle of the waters ſurface would be drawn with equal force toward the earth's center, and theſe particles do touch each other; none of them could get nearer the center than their neighbouring ones.

N. Right.—And now, ſuppoſing the earth to be at reſt, and the ſurface of the oceans and ſeas to be perfectly globular, what do you think the conſequence would be, if the earth ſhould begin, and continue to turn round on a line within itſelf, as if it turned on a real axis?

E. Let me think a little.—I have obſerved, that when our maid took her mop out of a pail of water, the head of the mop was round; but when ſhe began to trundle it on her arm, it immediately became flattened at the parts of the ſtick which were even with its ſurface; and it ſwelled out in the middle.—Pray, brother, if I may be allowed to make a very odd ſort of a compariſon, may not an imaginary line in the heart of that part of the ſtick which is within the mop be called the axis round which the mop turns; as you have told me that ſuch a line within the earth, from its North to

Pl.I.

Fig.1.

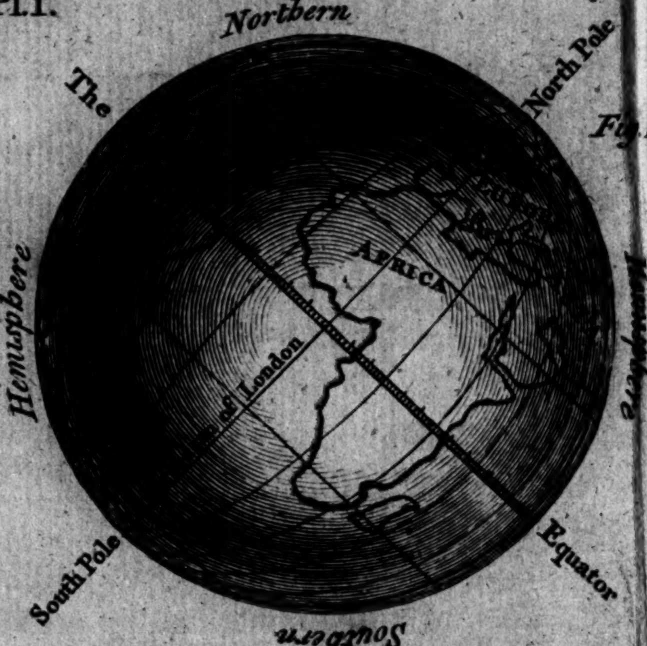


Fig.

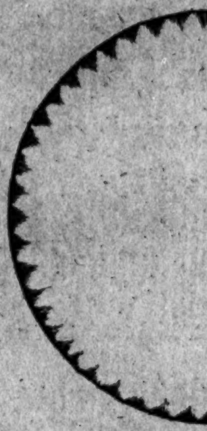
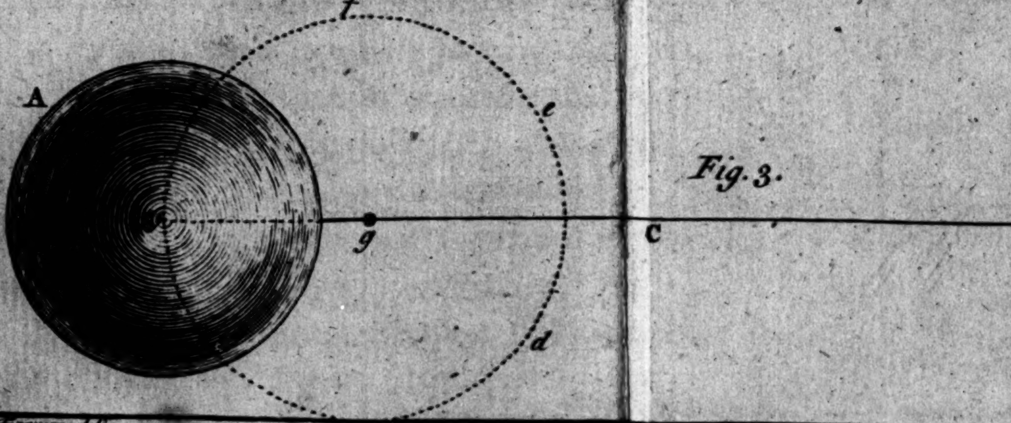
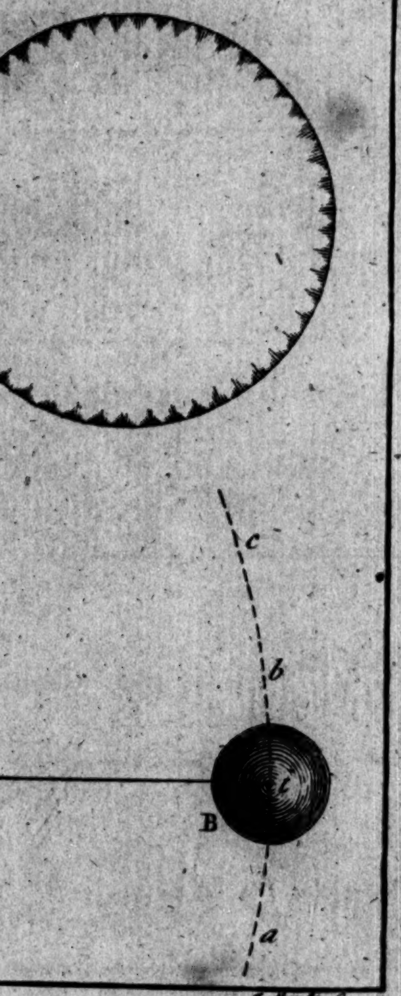


Fig.3.



J. Ferguson delin.

Fig. 2.



J. Mynde ſc.

its South poles, is called the axis of the earth?—If ſo, ſeeing that the waters on the earth are of as yielding a nature as the cotton of the mop, I apprehend, that if the earth turned round its axis, the ſurface of the ſeas about the poles would become flat, and the ſurface of the ſeas which are fartheſt from the poles would ſwell out, all around: and ſo, the figure of the earth would be like that of a whirling mop.

N. No philoſopher could have made a more apt compariſon, nor have drawn a better concluſion from it. When I told you before, that the earth is round, I did not mean that it is ſtrictly ſo; although at the diſtance of the moon, it would appear to be round, as its ſhadow on the moon does to us. I do not here conſider the hills as any thing, becauſe they are ſo little in compariſon to the whole bulk of the earth, that they take off no more from its roundneſs in general, than grains of duſt do from the roundneſs of *that* ſmall three inch globe which you ſee on the table. *It* is quite round, and covered all over with paper, on which there is a map of the land and water on the earth's ſurface.

face. The middle line (ſee Fig. 1. of PLATE I.) or circle, that is drawn round it, is called the *Equator*, which divides the globe into two equal parts, called *the Northern* and *Southern Hemiſpheres*, or half globes. The *North* and *South Poles* are the *middle points* of the North and South hemiſpheres, each pole being a quarter of a circle diſtant from each point of the equator, all around: and a ſtraight line drawn through the center from pole to pole, is called *the axis* of the globe.

If the thin papers were ſcraped off from the poles, and almoſt half way round them toward the equator, the globe would be a little flattened at the poles, and comparatively ſo much ſwelled out about the equator; but if it were then viewed from the diſtance of ſix or ſeven feet, it would ſtill appear to be round.

E. I believe it would;—but what of all this?

N. From actual meaſurement and obſervation, the earth is proved to be a little flattened at the poles, and ſwelled out about the equator; the equatoreal diameter of the earth being thirty-five miles longer than the axis or polar diameter. This you may think a great deal, but it is very little when compared with the bulk of the earth, as you will eaſily judge when I tell you, that no leſs than 25,000 Engliſh miles would meaſure it round: and the higheſt mountains that are known are not three miles of perpendicular height.—— Now, as water naturally runs downward, if the earth had no motion on its axis to keep up its figure, the water of the ſeas would run from the higher parts about the equator, to the lower parts about the poles, and overflow the polar regions for many hundred miles all around; and even Britain itſelf would be laid ſeveral miles under water.

E. This is a very plain caſe: and the not returning of the waters from the ſeas about the equator, is to me an evident proof of the earth's turning round its axis; without which, the ſurface of the waters would become of a general roundneſs, as I ſaw the head of the mop do when the maid left off trundling it.—And now it ſeems plain that the Almighty muſt have made the rigid earth as much higher about the equator, than the land is about thoſe places near the poles, as the earth's quick motion about the equatoreal parts would cauſe the waters to riſe there. For I ſee by the globe, that there are great quantities of land about the equator, and many ſmall iſlands in the ſeas, which are not overflowed.

N. The more you know of theſe matters, *Eudoſia*, ſtill the greater reaſon you will have to admire the power, and adore the wiſdom and goodneſs of the Deity.

E. Indeed, brother, I believe I ſhall.—And I already begin to think, that if an atheiſt would be perſuaded to learn Aſtronomy, it would ſoon cure him of his infidelity.

N. So I have often thought, ſince I knew any thing of the matter.

E. I think you told me, that almoſt three fourth parts of the ſurface of the earth is covered with ſeas; and by looking on *that* ſmall globe, I imagine it may be ſo. But you have not yet told me, how it is known, that the earth's circumference is twenty-five thouſand Engliſh miles; and perhaps I ſhould

I ſhould not be able to underſtand it if you did.

N. The bulk of the earth is aſcertained by (what is called) Geometry, and could not have been known by any other kind of learning. And as you do not yet underſtand any part of that ſcience, I ſhould only confound your head by talking to you on that ſubject at preſent.

E. Your ſaying, "*at preſent*," gives me ſome hopes, that you will endeavour to inſtruct me in that branch of ſcience afterward.——But can you tell me juſt now, how many miles of the earth is land, and how many are covered with the ſeas?

N. The ſurface of the earthy part of our great globe is divided into four great tracks or ſpaces, called *Europe*, *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *America*, as you ſee them laid out on the ſmall three inch globe.

According to meaſurement of the beſt maps, the ſeas and unknown parts of land contain 160,522,026 ſquare miles; the inhabited parts 38,990,569; *Europe* 4,456,065; *Aſia* 10,768,823; *Africa* 9,654,807; *America* 14,110,874.

14,110,874. In all, 199,512,595; which is the number of ſquare miles on the whole ſurface of our globe.

E. I admire the prodigious bulk of the earth; but infinitely more ſo, the power that muſt have ſet it in motion at firſt.

N. Nothing is great or ſmall but in compariſon. We are very big when compared with animals which can be ſeen only by the help of a microſcope: the earth is big indeed when compared with ourſelves, who live upon it: the planet Jupiter is a thouſand times as big as our earth, and the ſun is more than a thouſand times as big as Jupiter.——If you ſo juſtly admire the power that put our ſmall planet the earth into motion, how much more muſt you admire the power which put the whole planetary ſyſtem round us in motion!

E. I ſink into nothing, in my own mind. Alas, what have we to be proud of? If I had been proud before, Aſtronomy would have cured me effectually of it.

N. Indeed it might cure any one of pride: and I believe no aſtronomer can be either proud or impious. But hark!—the bell rings for breakfaſt; I thought to have ſatisfied your query about the ſun, but muſt leave it till the next opportunity. Be ſure then to put me in mind of it, and afterwards to talk about the ſolar ſyſtem.

E. I believe I ſhall have no occaſion to remind you.

DIALOGUE II.

On the BALANCE *of* NATURE *and the* SOLAR SYSTEM.

Neander.

WELL, ſiſter; what became of you yeſterday after breakfaſt? I went to my room immediately after, thinking you would follow me, that we might have a little converſation. But, inſtead of *that*, you have left me quite alone; for I never ſaw you the whole day afterward, except at dinner and ſupper.

Eudoſia. Indeed, brother, I was ſo much pleaſed with what you told me yeſterday morning, that I was willing to make the moſt and beſt of it that I could; and therefore employed the reſt of my time in writing down every thing that I could remember.

N. I am very glad of it; and now I find you intend to emulate a young lady of quality; who, laſt year, attended a courſe of lectures on experimental philoſophy at Tunbridge Wells; and always when ſhe went home, wrote down what ſhe had heard and ſeen. The perſon who read the lectures informed me, that he was (though with ſome difficulty) favoured with a ſight of the young Lady's manuſcript; and aſſured me, that ſhe had therein given a very good account of the machinery and experiments. I hope you will not refuſe to ſhew me yours, every day, as you proceed.

E. You ſhall always ſee it, were it only for this ſelfiſh reaſon, that you may correct and amend what is wrong in it; and then I ſhall reap the advantage. I will now repeat my yeſterday's query: To what is the ſun fixed? for you have convinced me that he does not move round the earth.

N. The ſun is not fixed to any thing at all; nor is it any way requiſite he ſhould. I told you that the falling of bodies to the earth is ſolely cauſed by the earth's attraction.

E. I remember it very well; and it ſeems plain to me, that their falling toward the earth's center, on all ſides of it, is a demonſtrative proof of the earth's attraction. For what elſe could poſſibly determine bodies to fall, on oppoſite ſides of the earth, in directions quite contrary to one another?

N. Right, *Eudoſia*, you are a philoſopher already: and I ſhall have very great pleaſure in teaching you, at leaſt, the rudiments of Aſtronomy,

The tendency of bodies to fall, is called their *Gravitation*, and the power which gives them that tendency, is called *Attraction.* Now, ſuppoſing the ſun (PLATE I. *Fig.* 2.) to be the only body that exiſts in univerſal ſpace, and that he is put into any part of open ſpace, pray, to what other part of ſpace do you think he would fall?

E. I think he could not fall to any other part of ſpace at all, becauſe there would be no other body to attract him: and therefore, I imagine, that he would always remain where he was placed, *ſelf-balanced on his center*; as my favourite poet *Milton* elegantly expreſſes it, concerning the earth.

N. Your obſervation is ſtrictly juſt. And now, to lead you further on, I tell you, that the ſun's attraction reaches many millions of miles all around him; and that all bodies attract each other according to their reſpective quantities of matter; that is, according to the number of particles of matter they are compoſed of. I have already told you that the ſun is a million of times as big as the earth: and as the ſun and earth are within the reach of each other's attraction; whether do you think, that the ſun ſhould fall to the earth, or the earth to the ſun?

E. I think, that if the ſun contains as much more matter than the earth does, as he is bigger than the earth, it is a million of times more reaſonable that the earth ſhould fall to the ſun, than that the ſun ſhould fall to the earth.

N. Right again, ſiſter; but now I muſt inform you, that the ſun is not ſo compact or denſe a body as the earth is; and therefore he doth not contain as much more matter than the earth does, as he is bigger than the earth. But his quantity of matter is more than 200,000 times as great as the earth's: and, conſequently, he attracts the earth more than 200,000 times as ſtrongly as the earth attracts him.

E. Then I ſhould think, that the ſun and earth would naturally fall toward each other, and come together at laſt: only, that the earth would fall 200,000 times as faſt toward the ſun, as the ſun would toward the earth.

N. And ſo they would, if there were nothing to hinder them.

E. And what is it that hinders them?

N. I will begin to anſwer your queſtion by aſking you one.—Did you ever put a pebble into a ſling, and whirl it round your head?

E. Yes, ſir, when I was a child.

N. And did you feel no tendency in the pebble to fly off from the ſling?

E. O, yes! and the moment I let the ſtring ſlip from my hand, away the pebble flew.——I likewiſe remember, that the faſter I whirled the ſling, the greater was the tendency of the pebble to fly off; and that I was obliged to pull the ſtring ſo much the ſtronger to keep the pebble from doing ſo.

N. That obſervation will be of more ſervice to you by and by, than you at preſent think of: but it would be too ſoon to tell you juſt now how it will.

E. I will wait till you find it proper to tell me. But I am almoſt impatient to know what you are to infer from the pebble and ſling.

N. All bodies that move in circles have a conſtant tendency to fly off from theſe circles; which tendency is called their *centrifugal force.* And, in order to keep them from flying off, there muſt be an *attractive force* at the centers of theſe circles, equal to the centrifugal force of the moving bodies. The earth goes round the ſun once a year, in an orbit or path which is nearly circular; and it would as naturally fly off from its orbit, if the ſun did not attract it, as the pebble flew out of the orbit that is deſcribed round your head, when you quitted your hold of the ſtring.

E. This is new doctrine to me; for you never told me before, that the earth goes round the ſun. The earth then has two motions, one round its axis in twenty-four hours, and one round the ſun in a year.—Can you prove as clearly that the earth goes round the ſun, as you have proved that it turns round its axis?

N. I will prove it negatively juſt now, and poſitively afterward. If the earth had no motion round the ſun, it could have no centrifugal force, to hinder it from falling to the ſun by its own weight or gravitation, which is conſtituted by the power of the ſun's attraction.

E. I ſee that the earth's motion round the ſun is indiſpenſably neceſſary, and am therefore ſatisfied that it does exiſt. But I think the ſun would require ſome motion too, in order to give him a centrifugal force; without which, it ſeems to me, that big as he is, the earth's attraction would pull him out of his place. For, I remember, that the pebble and ſling pulled my hand ſo ſtrongly, although the pebble was ſmall, that I could not poſſibly keep my hand ſteady whilſt the pebble was in motion.

N. Well done, ſiſter.—The ſun really moves in an orbit as well as the earth; and the ſun's orbit is as much leſs than the earth's, as his quantity of matter is greater than the earth's. And, as both theſe bodies go round their orbits in the ſame period of time, the ſun moves as much ſlower than the earth does, as his quantity of matter is greater than the earth's. So, what is wanting in the velocity or ſwiftneſs of the ſun's motion, is made up by his quantity of matter; and what is wanting in the earth's quantity of matter, is made up by the ſwiftneſs of its motion in its orbit: on which account their centrifugal forces are equal to each other's attractions; and as theſe attractions keep them from flying out of their orbits by their centrifugal forces, ſo theſe forces keep them from falling towards each other by their mutual attractions.—And this is what we call, *the great balance of nature.*

E. This is a new light to me, and a moſt delightful one it is. But, although I think I underſtand it, I wiſh you would further explain it by a figure.

N. Here is a figure (PLATE I. Fig. 3.) which I drew laſt night on purpoſe for you; in which, ſuppoſe *A* to repreſent the ſun, *B* the earth, and *C* the line of direction in which the ſun and earth mutually attract each other: in which line, take a point *g*, as much nearer the center of *A* than the center of *B*, as *B* contains leſs matter than *A*; the center of *A* being at *h*, and the center of *B* at *i*. If *A* and *B* were allowed to fall againſt each other, by the power of their mutual attractions, then, in the time that *A* would fall through the ſpace *h g*, *B* would fall through the ſpace *i g*; and both theſe bodies would meet at *g*, becauſe *B* would fall as much faſter than *A*, as its quantity of matter (and conſequently its attractive force) is leſs than that of *A*.

But, in the time the ſmall body *B* goes round the large circle *a b c*, the great body *A* goes round the ſmall circle *d e f*; by which motion, each of theſe bodies acquires a centrifugal force equal to the attractive force of the other; and the point *g* is the center of both the circles which the bodies deſcribe; and is called *their common center of gravity*, or the center of gravity between them.

E. I ſhould be glad to know why it is ſo called.

N. I will tell you —Suppoſe *A* and *B* to be two balls of different quantities of matter, and conſequently of different weights; and that thoſe balls are connected by a ſmall inflexible wire, *C*, that has no weight at all (if you can imagine a wire to have no weight, like the immaterial line in which the ſun and earth attract each other). Hang the wire by a thread fixed to the point *g*, which point is as much nearer the center of the great ball *A*, than it is to the center of the little ball *B*, as the weight of *B* is leſs than the weight of *A*: and then, theſe balls will ſupport and balance each other, like different weights at the two ends of a common ſteelyard, by which you have ſeen meat weighed at home, after it was brought from market. The point *g* may repreſent the center or axis of the ſteelyard, which bears the weights that are at both its ends. And, as gravity and weight are ſynonimous terms, the point *g*, or center of the ſteelyard, is not improperly termed the center of gravity of the weights *A* and *B*.

E. I underſtand you perfectly well; and am much obliged to you for the pains you have taken hitherto, to make every thing ſo plain to me.

N. And, now, if you twiſt the thread by which the wire and balls are ſuſpended at the point *g*, the untwiſting of the thread will cauſe them both to go round; the great ball in the ſmall circle *d e f*, and the little ball in the great circle *a b c*; and the center of gravity *g* between them will remain at reſt.

E. From which I infer, that the center of gravity between the ſun and the earth is a motionleſs point.

N. And your inference is juſt.

E. I was juſt going to aſk you a queſtion, but am very glad a lucky thought prevented me; for it would have been quite childiſh.

N. Remember what M. *Beaugrand* told you when he began to teach you French; *Never fear, but ſpeak out, right or wrong: if you are wrong I will not laugh at you; I will put you right.*—Now tell me what your intended queſtion was.

E. As we were obliged to hang the wire and balls by a thread, to ſupport their center of gravity; I was juſt about to aſk, what is it that ſupports the center of gravity between the earth and the ſun?

N. Well:—And what was the lucky thought that prevented your aſking *that* queſtion?

E. I immediately recollected, that we muſt ſupport the center of gravity between the two balls, becauſe, otherwiſe, they would have fallen to the great earth by the power of its attraction. But, as there is no greater body than the ſun and earth to attract *them*, they could fall no way but toward each other: and, therefore, the common center of gravity between them needs nothing to ſupport it.

N. If you had aſked the queſtion, I ſhould have told you the very ſame thing.

E. If all the parts of aſtronomy are as as eaſily learnt as thoſe which you have already taught me, I ſhall have no reaſon to be vain, even if I become a tolerable good aſtronomer by your inſtructions.

N. I dare not ſay they are; but I will make every part of it, which I inform you of, as plain as I can.

E. You have already told me that the earth is a planet, and that there are other planets beſides, which go round the ſun.

N. Yes; there are five beſides our earth: and they are called *Mercury*, *Venus*, *Mars*, *Jupiter*, and *Saturn*.

E. Then, our ſun muſt be their ſun too.

N. It is really ſo; and enlightens them all.

E. I could never believe that the Almighty does any thing in vain; and therefore I begin to think, that all the other planets are inhabited as well as our earth. For, to what purpoſe could the ſun ſhine upon lifeleſs lumps of matter, if there were no rational creatures upon them to enjoy the benefit of his light and heat?

N. Ay, why indeed?—And I will tell you one thing more, which will confirm your belief that they are inhabited. They turn round their axes, as our earth turns round its axis; for which plain reaſon, they have days and nights as our earth has: and the two which are fartheſt from the ſun, namely, *Jupiter* and *Saturn*, and which, conſequently, have much leſs light than our earth has; have moons to enlighten them, *Jupiter* four, and *Saturn* five.

E. To me, this is a poſitive proof of their being inhabited; and is enough to make us think, that we are but a ſmall part of the creation, or of the favourites of heaven: and that all the regards of Providence are not attached to our diminutive concerns.

N. The Divine Providence is univerſal. GOD loves his creatures, as is manifeſt by what he hath done for us, who, perhaps, deſerve leſs of his favour than the inhabitants of all the other planets do, taken together.—It is as eaſy to him to take care of thouſands of millions as of one individual, and to liſten to all their various requeſts.—On account of his omnipreſence, nothing can eſcape his notice; and on account of his omniſcience, nothing can eſcape his knowledge!

E. And, as his omnipotence may be inferred from his works, ſo I have often thought that his goodneſs may be inferred from his power. For, as he had power enough to make the world, he certainly has power enough to puniſh the world: and, conſequently, if his goodneſs were not equal to his power, he would puniſh us ſeverely for breaking his laws.

N. I believe, ſiſter, a more juſt inference was never made.

E. Do all the planets go round the ſun in a year, as our earth does?

N. No; thoſe which are neareſt the ſun go ſooneſt round him, and thoſe which are fartheſt from him are longeſt in performing their circuits.

E. And do they all move round the center of gravity between the ſun and them, as round a fixed point?

N. They do.

E. Then, as the times of their going round the ſun are ſo various, I cannot ſee how the ſun can deſcribe any regular circle round the common center of gravity between him and them all. For, in order that the ſun ſhould move regularly round ſuch a circle, I think all the planets would need to be joined together in one maſs.

N. 'Tis very true; and we muſt proceed by degrees. What I ſhewed you by the figure was only on ſuppoſition, that there is but one planet belonging to the ſun. But as there are ſix belonging to him, and going round him in very different periods of time, he is only agitated (as it were) round the common center of gravity of the whole ſyſtem; and deſcribes no regular or perfect circle round it, but is ſometimes nearer to it, and at other times farther from it, according as he is attracted by a greater or ſmaller number of planets toward any ſide of the heavens.

E. In what time do all the planets go round the ſun?

N. *Mercury* in 87 days 23 hours of our time; *Venus* in 224 days 17 hours; the *Earth* in 365 days 6 hours; *Mars* in 686 days 23 hours; *Jupiter* in 4332 days 12 hours; and *Saturn* in 10,759 days 7 hours; all the ſame way, from Weſt, by South, to Eaſt.

E. And do you know what their diſtances from the ſun are?

N. Their comparative diſtances from the ſun have been known long ago, both by the laws of nature, and by obſervation, and are as follows.—If we ſuppoſe the earth's diſtance from the ſun to be divided into 100,000 equal parts, Mercury's diſtance from the ſun will be equal to 38,710 of theſe parts; Venus's diſtance 72,333; Mars's diſtance 152,369; Jupiter's diſtance 520,096; and Saturn's diſtance 954,006.

E. And can you tell how many miles are contained in theſe parts?

N. Not ſo exactly as we could wiſh; yet aſtronomers have come much nearer to the knowledge thereof, by the late tranſit of Venus over the ſun, on the 6th of June 1761, than ever they were before.—But we muſt wait with patience till the year 1769, when there will be a much better tranſit of that planet over the ſun, in the evening of the third of June; by which means, if it be properly obſerved at different places of the earth, the dimenſions of the whole ſyſtem will be very nicely known. And the aſtronomers will do well to embrace *that* opportunity, becauſe there will not be ſuch another in an hundred years afterward. The method of finding theſe diſtances by the tranſit is purely geometrical; which, as you have not yet learned any thing of geometry, I cannot at preſent make you underſtand.

E. But, tell me what theſe diſtances are, as deduced from the late tranſit in June 1761.

N. Mercury's diſtance from the ſun is 36,841,468 Engliſh miles: Venus's diſtance 68,891,486: the Earth's diſtance 95,173,127: Mars's diſtance 145,014,148: Jupiter's diſtance 494,990,976: and Saturn's diſtance 907,956,130.

E. Theſe diſtances are ſo immenſely great, that I can form no ideas of them.

N. Then I will endeavour to render them more familiar to you. For we are generally ſo much uſed to ſpeak of thouſands and millions, that we have almoſt loſt the idea of the numbers they contain.

Suppoſe a body, projected from the ſun, ſhould continue to fly at the rate of 480 miles every hour (which is much about the ſwiftneſs of a cannon-ball), it would reach the orbit of Mercury in 8 years 276 days; of Venus in 16 years 136 days; of the earth in 22 years 226 days; of Mars in 34 years 165 days; of Jupiter in 117 years 237 days; and of Saturn in 215 years 287 days.

E. Amazing to think that a cannon-ball would be upwards of 200 years in going from the ſun to the remoteſt planet of the ſyſtem! The diſtance muſt indeed be immenſe!

N. Great as you think it (and to be ſure great it is), yet ſome of the comets go almoſt fourteen times as far from the ſun as Saturn is: notwithſtanding which, they are then nearer to the ſun than to any of the ſtars. For if any comet ſhould go as near to any ſtar as it is to the ſun, when fartheſt from him, it would be as much attracted by that ſtar as it is then by the ſun; and its motion being then toward the ſtar, it would go on, and become a comet to that ſtar; and we ſhould never hear of it any more.—And now, *Eudoſia*, what do you think of the diſtance of the ſtars?

E. I am loſt in wonder!—But ſuppoſing there were no comets, pray is there any other way by which we might know that the diſtance of the ſtars is ſo inconceivably great?

N. I ſhall only tell you of one way.—If we are at a great diſtance from two neighbouring houſes, they ſeem to be ſmall, and at a little diſtance from one another. But as we approach nearer and nearer to them, they ſeem to grow bigger and bigger, and the diſtance between them to encreaſe. You know this.

E. Very well: pleaſe to proceed.

N. The earth goes round the ſun every year, in an orbit, which is upwards of 190 millions of miles in diameter.——Hence, we are 190 millions of miles nearer to ſome of the ſtars juſt now, than we were half a year ago, or ſhall be half a year hence; and yet, for all that, the ſame ſtars ſtill appear to us of the ſame magnitude, and at the ſame diſtance from each other, not only to the bare eye, but alſo when viewed by the niceſt made inſtruments: — which ſhews very plainly, that the whole diameter of the earth's orbit is but a dimenſionleſs point in compariſon to the diſtance of the ſtars.

E. All further proofs of the immenſe (and, I ſhould think, almoſt infinite) diſtance of the ſtars, would be ſuperfluous. But, as we were talking about the comets, pray, are they not dangerous?—We are always frightened when we hear of their appearing, leſt their fiery trains ſhould burn the world.

N. That is owing to people's not knowing better. The orbits of the planets are all nearly in the ſame plane (as if they were circles drawn on a flat board), but the orbits of the comets are elliptical, and all of them ſo oblique to the orbits of the planets, and alſo to each other, that no comet can ever touch a planet. And, as to thoſe appearances, which are called the tails of the comets, they are only thin vapours, which ariſe from the comets, and which could not hurt any planet, if it ſhould happen to go through that vapour when the comet is croſſing the plane in which the planet's orbit lies. If theſe trains were fire, we could not ſee any thing through them that is beyond them. For, if you hold a candle between you and any object, you cannot ſee that object through the flame of the candle; but the ſmalleſt ſtars are ſeen through the tail of a comet.

E. This is comfortable doctrine indeed.

N. Beſides, you know that the world muſt be converted to Chriſtianity before it be burned; which, we can hardly believe, will be within the time that you and I can live, according to the ordinary courſe of nature.

E. Alas, brother! our people who go into thoſe remote parts where Chriſtianity was never heard of, behave ſo unjuſtly and cruelly to the poor natives, as might rather frighten them from the chriſtian religion, than induce them to embrace it. I confeſs I am not at all ſurpriſed, when I hear, that the native Americans riſe ſometimes in large bodies, and deſtroy thoſe who call themſelves Chriſtians, on account of their barbarous ways of uſing that people.

N. It

N. It is not at all to be wondered at: for their principles are, *Good for good*, and *Evil for evil.*

E. As it makes me melancholy to think or ſpeak of theſe things; I beg we may reſume our intended ſubject. Conſidering how far the planets are from the ſun, and in what times they go round him, they muſt move very faſt in their orbits. I ſhould be glad to know how many miles they move every hour?

N. Mercury moves 109,699 Engliſh miles every hour; Venus, 80,295; the Earth, 68,217; Mars, 55,287; Jupiter, 29,083; and Saturn, 22,101.

E. And ſo we are carried 68,217 miles every hour, along with the earth in open ſpace, without being in the leaſt ſenſible of that rapid motion.

N. We are indeed, ſiſter.

E. And can you tell me what the magnitudes of the ſun and planets are?

N. When the diſtance of an object is known, there are eaſy geometrical rules for deducing its real bulk from its apparent bulk.—According to the fore-mentioned diſtances, the ſun's diameter is 893,760 miles (and conſequently he is

1,410,200 times as big as the earth); Mercury's diameter, 3,100; Venus's 9360; the Earth's, 7970; Mars's diameter, 5150; Jupiter's, 94,100; and Saturn's diameter, 77,990 Engliſh miles *.

The moon's diſtance from the earth's center is 240,000 Engliſh miles, her diameter is 2170; ſhe moves (with reſpect to the earth) 2290 miles in her orbit every hour; and ſhe goes round the earth, from change to change, in 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes.

Jupiter has four moons, going round him in different times and at different diſtances. His firſt, or neareſt moon, goes round him in 1 day, 18 hours, 36 minutes; the ſecond, in 3 days, 13 hours, 15 minutes; the third, in 7 days, 3 hours, 59 minutes; and the fourth, or fartheſt moon from him, in 16 days, 18 hours, 30 minutes.

Saturn has five moons, the neareſt of which goes round him in 1 day, 21 hours, 19 minutes; the ſecond, in 2 days, 17 hours, 40 minutes; the third, in 4 days, 12 hours, 25 minutes; the fourth, in 15 days, 22 hours, 41 minutes; and the fifth, or outermoſt, in 79 days, 7 hours, 48 minutes. This planet is encompaſſed by a broad thin ring, ſet edge-ways round it, and the diſtance of the ring from the planet is equal to the breadth of the ring. The ſun ſhines for almoſt 15 of our years together on the northern ſide of the ring, then goes off, and ſhines as long on the ſouthern ſide of it: ſo there is but one day and one night on each ſide of the ring, in the time of Saturn's whole revolution about the ſun, which takes up almoſt 30 of our years,

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* As the diſtances are now found to be greater than they were computed to be before the year 1761, the diameters muſt be ſo much larger in proportion than the former computations made them.

E. A long day and night indeed, for the inhabitants of the ring, if any ſuch there be. Undoubtedly, if it is inhabited, it muſt be by beings very different from us; as we have no reaſon to believe, but that the DEITY has accommodated their days and nights as well for them as he has ours for us.—But you told me, that the other planets turn round their axes, as our earth does: do they all turn round the ſame way, or eaſtward, ſo as to make the ſun and ſtars appear to go round weſtward; and in what times do they turn round?

N. By viewing them with good teleſcopes, we ſee ſpots upon moſt of them, which adhere to their ſurfaces, and appear and diſappear regularly on their oppoſite ſides. By the motions of theſe ſpots, which are all eaſtward, we know that Venus turns round her axis in 24 days, 8 hours, of our time; by which divide 225 of our days, the time in which Venus goes round the ſun, or the length of her year; and we ſhall find, that her year contains only $9\frac{1}{4}$ of her days. Mars turns round in 24 hours, 40 minutes, of our time; and Jupiter in 9 hours, 56 minutes. We cannot tell in what times Mercury and Saturn turn round their axes, becauſe no ſpots have been ſeen upon them, even by the beſt teleſcopes. —The ſun turns round his axis in 25 days, 6 hours, from Weſt to Eaſt, alſo.

E. Why ſhould the ſun turn round? for, as he is the fountain of light, he can have no days and nights.

N. To turn away his dark ſpots from long facing the planets, and thereby to

diſpenſe

diſpenſe his light the more equally all around him to the planets. But, are you not tired by this morning's long converſation?

E. Far from it, brother, though I am ſure you may. But what ſhall I do? for I fear I cannot remember much of what you have told me this morning, ſo as to write it down.

N. Never mind that, *Eudoſia*; for I believe I ſhall publiſh theſe our converſations, for the ſake of other young ladies; many of whom are, no doubt, willing to learn Aſtronomy, but have nobody to teach them. And then you can have the whole together in print.

E. If you do, Sir, I muſt inſiſt upon your not mentioning my name *.

N. Your deſire ſhall be complied with.

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* Several years ago, I had the pleaſure of inſtructing a young lady, who, for goodneſs of heart, acuteneſs of judgment, and ſtrong inclinations to learn aſtronomy, anſwered exactly to the account here given of *Eudoſia*.

DIALOGUE III.

On GRAVITY *and* LIGHT.

Neander.

SO, ſiſter, I find you are not willing to ſlip the morning opportunity, when we can be undiſturbed, and by ourſelves. Have you made any remarks upon our laſt converſation?

Eudoſia. Yes, brother.—In the firſt place, I remember you told me, that the planet *Mercury* moves 109,699 miles every hour in its orbit, and *Saturn* only about 22,000. I obſerved likewiſe, that the further the planets are from the ſun, they not only take longer times to go round him, but alſo move ſlower in every part of their reſpective orbits. Can you aſſign any reaſon for this?

N. The nearer that any planet is to the ſun, the more ſtrongly it is attracted by the ſun; the farther any planet is from the ſun, the leſs is the force of the ſun's attraction upon it. And, therefore, thoſe planets which are the nearer to the ſun muſt move the faſter in their orbits, in order thereby to acquire centrifugal forces equal to the power of the ſun's attraction: and thoſe which are the farther from the ſun muſt move the ſlower, in order that they may not have too great a degree of centrifugal force, for the weaker attraction of the ſun at thoſe diſtances.

E. Then I underſtand, that the ſun's attraction, at each particular planet, is equal to the centrifugal force of each planet; and, by that means, the planets are all retained in their reſpective orbits. Is it not ſo?

N. Accurately ſo.

E. Then, as the power of the Deity is manifeſt, in having ſet off ſuch large bodies as the planets are, with ſuch amazing degrees of velocity; ſo his great wiſdom is conſpicuous, in having ſo exactly adjuſted their velocities, and, conſequently, their centrifugal forces, to the different degrees of the ſun's attraction at the diſtances the planets are from him.——Here is a wonderful balance indeed! Can there be an atheiſt? I am ſure no man could be ſo, after hearing ſuch things as you have told me of.

N. 'Tis ſaid there are atheiſts; but they muſt all be ſtupid fools. The Almighty has laid the great book of nature open to our view; ſo that, every one that runs may read. Suppoſing matter had exiſted from eternity (which, by the bye, is too great a compliment to be paid to matter), I imagine the greateſt atheiſt in the world could hardly bring himſelf to believe that ſtones could have hewed themſelves, bricks made themſelves, trees ſhaped themſelves into beams and boards, and mortar made itſelf; and then all theſe materials have jumbled themſelves together, ſo as to build a houſe. And what is a houſe in compariſon to a planetary ſyſtem; or the ſkill required to build it when compared with the organization of any inſect?

E. Nothing at all. But I am apt to lead you into digreſſions. Doth the power of the ſun's attraction decreaſe in proportion as the diſtance from him increaſes?

N. No: his attractive force diminiſhes in proportion as the ſquares of the diſtances (that is, as the diſtances multiplied by themſelves) from him increaſe. So that, at twice the diſtance from the ſun's center, his attractive force is four times leſs; at thrice the diſtance, it is three times three times, or nine times leſs; at four times the diſtance, the attraction is four times four times, or ſixteen times leſs; and ſo on.—And this we find, from the comparative diſtances of the planets from the ſun, and their different velocities in their orbits: beſides, I have often ſeen this experimentally confirmed by a machine called *the whirling-table.*

E. If I underſtand this; ſuppoſing there are four planets ſo placed, as that the diſtance of the ſecond from the ſun is twice as great as the diſtance of the firſt; the diſtance of the third, three times as great; and the diſtance of the fourth, four times as great as the diſtance of the firſt: the fourth will be attracted only with a ſixteenth part of the force wherewith the firſt

Pl. II.

Fig. 1.

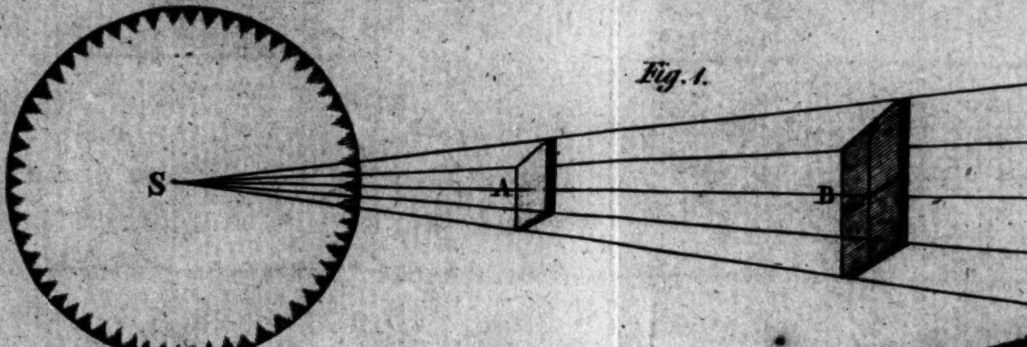


Fig. 2.

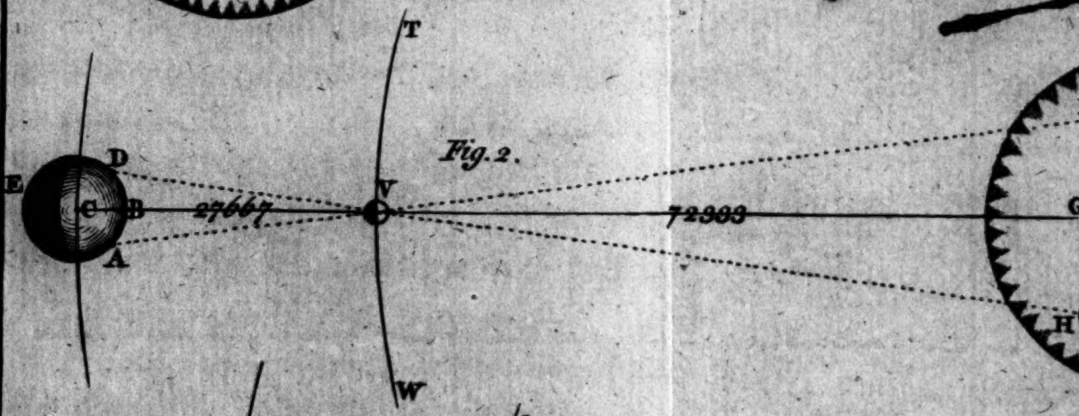
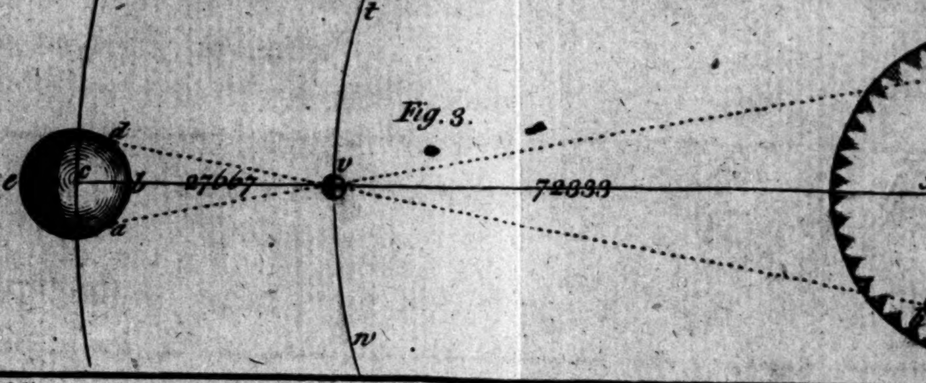


Fig. 3.



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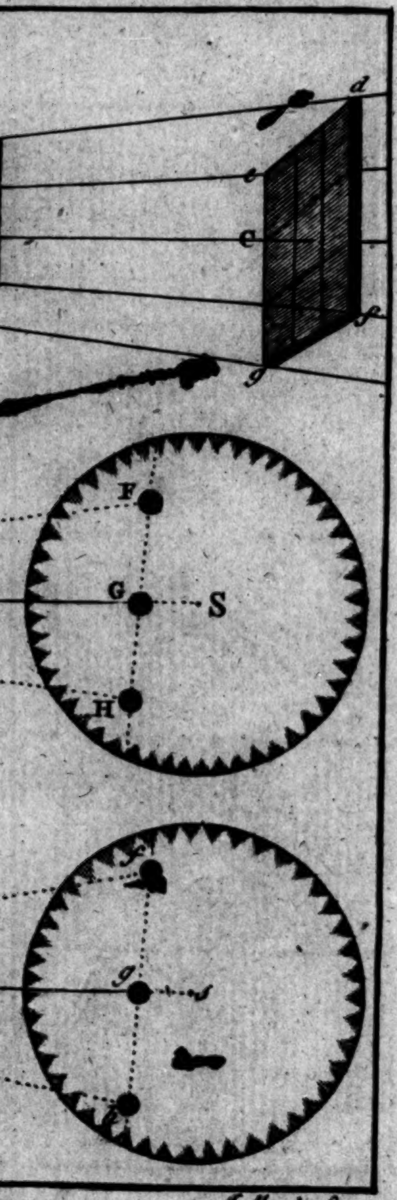

J. Mynde sc.

firſt is attracted; the third only with a ninth part of the force; and the ſecond with only a fourth part of the force that attracts the firſt.

N. Exactly ſo.

E. I ſhould be glad to know the reaſon why the ſun's attraction decreaſes in proportion to the ſquares of the diſtances from him. Why do you ſhake your head?

N. Becauſe you aſk me a queſtion which Sir ISAAC NEWTON himſelf could not ſolve; although he was the prince of philoſophers.

E. But can you give me no idea at all of it?

N. I could; and a very plain one too, if the attractive force (the effect of which we call gravity) acted only according to the ſurface of the attracted body.

E. Your *if* implies that it does not: but, if it did, why ſhould it decreaſe in that proportion?

N. I have drawn a figure for your inſpection (PLATE II. *Fig.* 1.) which indeed is for a quite different purpoſe: but it would exactly ſolve your queſtion, if gravity acted, as all mechanical cauſes do, only on the ſurface of bodies.

Let *S* be the center of the ſun; and *S d*, *S e*, *S f*, *S g*, be, as it were, lines of attractive force, drawing the three ſquare plates *A*, *B*, and *C*, toward *S*. Theſe lines touch only the four corners of the plates; but we may ſuppoſe the whole ſpace within them to be full of ſuch attractive lines, laying hold of all the parts, or points (if you will) of the ſurface of each plate: and every particle of matter in each plate requiring an equal degree of power to draw it equally faſt toward the ſun.

Now, let the plate *B* be twice as far from the ſun's center as the plate *A* is; the plate *C* three times as far, and the attractive forces equal on each plate, as if the above-mentioned four lines *S d*, *S e*, *S f*, and *S g*, were four cords, equally ſtretched, and pulling all the plates with equal forces toward *S*.—But, the plate *B* being twice as long, and twice as broad as the plate *A*, it is plain, by the figure, that *B* contains four times as much ſurface as *A* does, and four times as great a quantity of matter, ſuppoſing it as thick as *A*; and the plate *C*, being three times as broad and three times as long as *A*, contains nine times as much ſurface and matter as *A* does, ſuppoſing it of an equal thickneſs with *A*.

Suppoſe now, that the intermediate lines of attraction, between the four corner lines, are ſo cloſe together, as that they lay hold of every point of the ſurface of *A*, and draw it toward *S* with all their force: it is plain, that they can only lay hold of every fourth point of the ſurface of *B*, and of every ninth point of the ſurface of *C*; ſo that, the plate *B* will want three fourth parts of the attraction that would be ſufficient to draw it toward *S* as faſt as the plate *A* is drawn; and *C* will want eight ninth parts of the attraction that would be ſufficient to make it move as faſt as *A* moves toward *S*.

E. I ſee this very well: but, if gravity acts not according to the quantity of ſurface, pray how doth it act?

N. Exactly in proportion to the ſolid contents of bodies; that is, to the quantities of matter they contain. For, you know, that if you would take the plate *C* as it is, and weigh it in a balance; then take it out, and cut it in the lines drawn on its ſurface, by which means you would divide it into nine ſquare pieces: if you then lay them above one another in the ſcale, they will be juſt as heavy as they were before, when they lay at each other's edges, all in one piece, in the ſcale. Or, if you ſuppoſe them to be ſo cut, and then joined together at each other's backs, and put them at the diſtance *S c* from the ſun, as before; they will have only a ninth part of the ſurface toward the ſun as before: and yet, the ſun's attractive force on them will be juſt the ſame.

E. Then, it ſeems, there is no way of accounting for the manner in which gravity acts, but by reſolving it into the will of the Deity; ſeeing that the quantity of ſurface has nothing to do in the caſe.

N. Indeed there is not. And, therefore, when I henceforth ſpeak of gravity I would have you always underſtand, that I do not thereby mean a *cauſe*, but the *effect* of a cauſe, which we do not comprehend.

Beſides, you know, that if gravity acted according to the ſurfaces, or bulks of bodies, a cork would be as heavy as a piece of lead of the ſame bulk as the cork.

E. Very true.—But, as you told me that the figure we have been looking at, was not intended to ſhew how gravity acts; may I enquire what you intend to teach me by it, as you ſaid you drew it for me?

N. It is to ſhew, that the light of the ſun, or of any other luminous body, decreaſes in proportion as the ſquare of the diſtance from the luminous body increaſes. The rays of the ſun's light go out in ſtraight lines from all points of the ſun's ſurface: and, conſequently, the farther they go off from the ſun, the more they ſpread; and ſo they cover the more of the ſurfaces of bodies at the greater diſtances.

E. How is it known that light moves in ſtraight lines?

N. Becauſe, if we endeavour to look at the ſun, or at a candle, through the bore of a bended pipe, we cannot ſee it; but through a ſtraight pipe we can.

E. Enough, brother; pleaſe now to explain the figure.

N. Let *S* be the ſun's center, and *S d*, *S e*, *S f*, *S g*, be four rays of light, going out from the ſun's ſurface in ſtraight lines (in the ſame direction as if they proceeded from his center), and ſuppoſe the ſpace within theſe rays to be filled with others. Take the diſtances *S A*, *S B*, *S C*, from the ſun's center, ſo as *S B* ſhall be twice as great as *S A*, and *S C* thrice as great. Then, at the diſtance *S A* place the little ſquare plate *A*, on which all the rays will fall that fill the above-mentioned ſpace at *A*. At the diſtance *S B*, place the ſquare plate *B*, which being twice as long and twice as broad as the plate *A*, it contains four times as much ſurface as *A* does: and if *A* be taken away, all the light that fell upon it, will fall upon, and cover the whole ſurface of *B*; which being four times as large in ſurface as *A* is, and having only as much light upon it as *A* had, every point of the ſurface of *B* can have no more than a fourth part of the light that fell upon every point of the ſurface of *A*. And, laſtly, at three times the diſtance *S A*, place the ſquare plate *C*; which being three times as long and three times as broad as the plate *A*, it contains nine times as great a ſurface: and then if *B* be taken out of the way, ſo as to let all the light that fell upon it go on to the plate *C*, the light will juſt cover the ſurface of that plate; which being nine times as large as the ſurface of *A*, and having no more light upon it than *A* had, 'tis plain, that the light upon every point of *C* is but a ninth part ſo ſtrong and vivid as it was upon every point of *A*.

E. Nothing can be plainer than this: and it follows of courſe, that at four times the diſtance of *A* from the ſun, his light is ſixteen times weaker than at *A*; at five times the diſtance, it is twenty-five times weaker; and ſo on. I thank you for making this ſo plain.

N. Indeed I deſerve none of your thanks for it. I copied the figure from Doctor Smith's Optics. That worthy gentleman was my good old maſter; and he is maſter of Trinity College in Cambridge.

E. Seeing that the comparative diſtances of all the planets from the ſun are known, I make no doubt but you can tell me, what the comparative quantities of the ſun's light on all the planets are.

N. Very eaſily.——The ſun's light is ſeven times as great on Mercury as on the Earth; about twice as great at Venus; at Mars, it is not half ſo great, or ſtrong, as we have it on the Earth; at Jupiter, only a twenty-eighth part ſo ſtrong as at the Earth; and at Saturn, is but about a ninetieth part ſo ſtrong as with us.

E. Then, I ſhould be almoſt tempted to think,—but I cannot—will not indulge ſuch a thought, as that the Deity is partial: for I cannot imagine the inhabitants of our Earth to be better than thoſe of the other planets. On the contrary, I would fain hope they have not acted ſo abſurdly with reſpect to him, as we have done.

N. Tell me freely what the thought was that aroſe in your mind, which you are ſo willing to ſuppreſs.—The Deity is no other way a reſpecter of perſons than that of properly diſtinguiſhing between the good and the bad; and ſo rewarding the one, and puniſhing the other accordingly.

E. It ſeemed to me, that the inhabitants of the neareſt planets to the ſun muſt be blinded by too much light; and that thoſe of the fartheſt planets from the ſun muſt be puniſhed all their lives, with ſo weak a light, as can be called little better than darkneſs.—We could not bear ſeven times as much light as we have from the ſun; nor be able to do our work with only a ninetieth part of the light we have.

N. Your reflexion, ſiſter, is very natural. But, after aſking you two or three plain queſtions, I believe I ſhall be

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N. Your reflexion, ſiſter, is very natural. But, after aſking you two or three plain queſtions, I believe I ſhall be able to give you full ſatisfaction on that head.

E. Pray aſk them, and I will anſwer them if I can.

N. After you have been a while out in the ſnowy ſtreet, can you ſee as well to work with your needle immediately on coming into your room, as you did before you went out?

E. No.

N. Can you bear the ſtrong reflection of the ſun's light from the ſnow, juſt as well when you go out into the ſtreet, as when you have been walking half an hour in it?

E. No.

N. Can you give ſuch a reaſon for this as would ſatisfy a philoſopher? For you know that the ſnow reflects not leſs light for your having been a while walking in it; nor is your room a bit the darker for your having been out of it.

E. I wiſh I could, but indeed I cannot.

N. Then I will tell you.—Our eyes are made ſo, that their pupils (which let in the light, whereby we ſee objects) dilate when the light is weak, that they may take in the more of it; and contract when the light is ſtrong, that they may admit the fewer of its rays.—Whilſt you are in your room, the pupils of your eyes are dilated; and for that reaſon, when you go out, they take in too much of the light reflected from the ſnow, which you find is hurtful. But they ſoon contract ſo, as to admit no more of that ſtrong light than you can eaſily bear.—— And then, when you come into your room, with the pupils of your eyes contracted, the room, being not ſo light as the ſtreet, appears darker to you than it did before you went out: but, in a ſhort time, the pupils dilate again; and then they let in a ſufficient quantity of light for you to work by.

Now, ſuppoſing all the other planets to be inhabited by ſuch beings as we are (though, for reaſons I ſhall mention afterwards, we cannot believe they are), if the pupils of their eyes who live on the planet Mercury are ſeven times as ſmall as ours are, the light will appear no ſtronger to them there than it doth to us here. And if the pupils of their eyes who live in Saturn are ninety times as large as ours (which they will be, if they are nine times and an half as large in diameter as ours; and which will appear to be no deformity where all are alike, and other ſorts have never been ſeen), the light there will be of the ſame ſtrength as it is to our eyes here.—Pray, *Eudoſia*, how many full moons, do you think, would there need to be placed in a clear ſky, to afford us moon-light equal to common day-light, when the ſun doth not ſhine out, and all our light is by reflection from the clouds?

E. Indeed I cannot tell:—but am apt to think, that ſixty, or an hundred, at moſt, would do. For, when the full moon is not clouded, ſhe ſhines ſo clear, that I can read by her light.

N. Sixty, or an hundred?——I aſſure you, that you are greatly miſtaken: for it would require ninety thouſand; and *that* number would fill the whole of our viſible ſky.

E. You amaze me! but I know you will not deceive me. Pray, how can you find any method of comparing moon-light with day-light, ſo as to aſcertain the great difference between the quantities thereof?

N. Have you never obſerved the moon pretty high up in the morning, after the ſun was riſen, when the moon was about three quarters old?

E. Yes, brother: and when I have ſeen her, as it were, among whitiſh clouds, ſhe appeared much of the ſame colour as they did; very dim in compariſon with what ſhe appears in the night.

N. And yet, ſhe was juſt as bright then as ſhe is in the night; only the ſuperior light of the day made her ſeem ſo much otherwiſe. Like a candle, which appears very bright in the night-time; but ſet it in the ſtreet in day-light, and it will ſeem very dim, although

though its real brightneſs is ſtill the ſame.

E. I think I could almoſt tell what you are to infer from all this; but will not ſpeak, leſt I ſhould be miſtaken again. And therefore I beg you will proceed.

N. When the ſun is hid by clouds, all the light we have is by reflection from them. The moon reflects the ſun's light in the night-time, as the clouds do in the day: and as ſhe can reflect no more light in the day than a ſmall bit of a whitiſh cloud does, that covers as much of the ſky as the moon covers; ſhe can reflect no more in the night.——And as the full moon fills only a ninety-thouſandth part of the ſky, her light is no more than equal to a ninety-thouſandth part of common day-light. Now, as the light of the ſun at Saturn is equal to a ninetieth part of his light at the earth, and common day-light at the earth is 90,000 times as great as moon-light; divide 90,000 by 90, and the quotient will be 1000; which ſhews, that the ſun's light at Saturn is 1000 times as great as the light of the full moon is to us.

E. I ſee plainly that it muſt be ſo.—Oh!

N. Why do you ſigh, *Eudoſia?*

E. Becauſe there is not an univerſity for ladies as well as for gentlemen. Why, *Neander*, ſhould our ſex be kept in total ignorance of any ſcience, which would make us as much better than we are, as it would make us wiſer?

N. You are far from being ſingular in this reſpect. I have the pleaſure of being acquainted with many ladies who think as you do. But if fathers would do juſtice to their daughters, brothers to their ſiſters, and huſbands to their wives, there would be no occaſion for an univerſity for the ladies; becauſe, if thoſe could not inſtruct theſe themſelves, they might find others who could. And the conſequence would be, that the ladies would have a rational way of ſpending their time at home, and would have no taſte for the too common and expenſive ways of murdering it, by going abroad to card-tables, balls, and plays: and then, how much better wives, mothers, and miſtreſſes they would be, is obvious to the common ſenſe of mankind.—The miſfortune is, there are but few men who know theſe things: and where that is the caſe, they think the ladies have no buſineſs with them; and very abſurdly imagine, becauſe they know nothing of ſcience themſelves, that it is beyond the reach of women's capacities.

E. But, is there no danger of our ſex's becoming too vain and proud, if they underſtood theſe things as well as you do?

N. I am ſurpriſed to hear you talk ſo oddly.——Have you forgot what you told me two days ago? namely, that if you had been proud before, the knowledge of Aſtronomy, you believed, would make you humble?

E. You have caught me napping, as the ſaying is:—but I will not take up more of your time at preſent with digreſſions. I remember, this morning, to have heard you mention the light's *going* from one place to another, as if it took ſome time in moving through open ſpace. I know that ſound does ſo; becauſe I have ſeen the flaſh of a diſtant cannon before I heard the noiſe that it made.

N. True, ſiſter; and you did not ſee the flaſh at the very inſtant when it was given; though you ſaw it very ſoon after.

E. And do you know with what degree of ſwiftneſs light moves?

N. Yes; and you ſhall ſoon know too. The Earth's orbit lies far within the orbit of Jupiter.

E. Undoubtedly; becauſe Jupiter is much farther from the Sun than the Earth is.

N. Then you know, that when the Earth is between Jupiter and the Sun, the Sun and Jupiter appear oppoſite to each other in the heavens. And when the Sun is nearly between us and Jupiter, the Sun and Jupiter appear nearly in the ſame part of the heavens.

E. Undoubtedly they muſt.

N. And therefore, when the Sun and Jupiter appear almoſt cloſe together, the Earth is almoſt the whole diameter of its orbit farther from Jupiter, than when it and Jupiter appear oppoſite to each other in the heavens.

E. Certainly.

N. The times when Jupiter's moons muſt be eclipſed in his ſhadow are eaſily calculated; becauſe, by teleſcopic obſervations, the times in which they go round him are accurately known: and the apparent vaniſhing of theſe moons in the ſhadow may be very well perceived through a teleſcope; or the inſtants when they recover their light again, by the ſun's ſhining upon them, at their going out of the ſhadow. And it has been always obſerved, ſince teleſcopes were invented, that theſe eclipſes are ſeen ſixteen minutes ſooner when the Earth is neareſt to Jupiter, than when it is fartheſt from him. So that, if there were two earths moving round the ſun in the ſame orbit, and always keeping oppoſite to each other; when one of them is at its leaſt diſtance from Jupiter, and the other at its greateſt, an obſerver on the neareſt would ſee the ſame eclipſe ſixteen minutes ſooner than an obſerver on the fartheſt would: which ſhews, that light takes ſixteen minutes to move through a ſpace equal to the width or diameter of the earth's orbit, which is one hundred and ninety millions of miles. And, conſequently, it muſt take eight minutes of time in coming from the ſun to the earth; as the ſun is nearly in the center of the earth's orbit: that is, at the half of one hundred and ninety millions of miles, or ninety-five millions of miles from the earth.

E. I underſtand this; but a difficulty riſes in my mind.

N. Only mention it, and I will remove it, if I can.

E. The rays of the ſun's light come directly from him to the Earth; but his rays from Jupiter's moons come to us only by reflection. Are you ſure that reflected light moves with the ſame velocity that direct light does?

N. There is no reaſon to believe but that it does. And I imagine, I can very eaſily convince you that it does ſo.

If the particles of light did not fly off from the planets as faſt as they came upon them, there would ſtill be an accumulation of light upon them; which would make them appear every night brighter and brighter; but, in reality, they do not. And if the light flew off faſter from the planets than it comes upon them, they would appear dimmer and dimmer every night; which is not at all the caſe.

E. But are *all* the rays which the ſun darts on any planet *reflected* from it, and none of them loſt or *abſorbed* in the matter of which the planet is compoſed? Or, if *ſome* of them be abſorbed, will not this invalidate your argument?

N. Not at all, if the *abſorbed* rays bear a conſtant proportion to the *whole* number of rays with which the planet is ſucceſſively illuminated; and this muſt undoubtedly be the caſe; for the ſame parts of the planet's ſurface which either reflect, or abſorb the rays that fall upon them *this* moment, will be equally diſpoſed to reflect or abſorb the rays that fall upon them in the *next:* and ſo the *ſame proportion* between the abſorbed and reflected rays, or between them and the whole quantity of light thrown on the planet, will be continually preſerved.

E. But what if ſome parts of the planet's ſurface be more hardened by drought, or ſoftened by wet, as on our earth; or be in any other reſpect more diſpoſed, either to reflect, or abſorb the Sun's rays at ſome times than at others; would not this vary the proportion you have mentioned?

N. If we may judge of this from our own globe, where the contrary qualities of drought and wet, hardneſs and ſoftneſs, ſmoothneſs and roughneſs of ſome parts of its ſurface, ſo far as they reſult from any alterations of *weather*, &c. if taken upon an average for a whole year, or other given time, and throughout any half of the Earth's ſurface; they will, very nearly, if not exactly, balance each other. The ſame may be therefore ſuppoſed to hold good in the other planetary worlds; and ſo the proportion before mentioned will not be ſenſibly altered.

E. You have quite removed my difficulty, brother; and I thank you for having done it. But, as light comes from the Sun to the Earth in eight minutes of time, its ſwiftneſs muſt be amazingly great. Let me try whether I can compute it: for you taught me not only the four common rules of arithmetic before you went to the univerſity, but even the rule of three. The Sun's diſtance from the Earth is 95 millions of miles, in round numbers; and light moves through that ſpace in 8 minutes of time; divide, therefore, 95,000,000 by 8, and the quotient is 11,875,000, for the number of miles that light moves in a minute. Now, I remember that you told me, a cannon-ball moves at the rate of 480 miles in an hour, which is 8 miles in a minute; I therefore divide 11,875,000 by 8, and the quotient is 1,484,375; ſo that light moves more than a million of times as ſwift as a cannon-ball.——Amazing indeed!

N. It is ſo:—And now I will tell you ſomething which is full as amazing.

E. What can that be? Do you mean the power of the Almighty?

N. Far from it: I only mean the inconceivable ſmallneſs of the particles of light.

E. And how do you know that they are ſo inconceivably ſmall?

N. The force with which a body ſtrikes any obſtacle, is directly in proportion to the quantity of matter in the body, multiplied by the velocity with which it moves. And, conſequently, as the velocity of light is, in round numbers, a million of times as great as the velocity of a cannon bullet; if a million of the particles of light were but as big as a common grain of ſand, we could no more keep our eyes open to bear the impulſe of light, than we could to have ſand ſhot point blank againſt them from a great cannon.

Another way of proving that the particles of light are ſo ſmall as to exceed all human comprehenſion, is this: Let a lighted candle be ſet on the top of a ſpire ſteeple in the night-time, and there will be a very large ſpherical ſpace filled with the light of the candle before a grain of the tallow be conſumed; and as *that* grain of tallow is divided into ſo many particles as fill all the ſpace in which the light is diffuſed, can you poſſibly imagine how ſmall the particles are into which it is ſo divided?

E. Indeed I can form no idea thereof.

N. A very good computiſt has found, that the particles of blood of thoſe animals which can only be ſeen by means of a microſcope, are as much ſmaller than a globe, whoſe diameter is only a tenth part of an inch, as that ſmall globe is leſs than the whole earth. And yet, that their particles of blood are like mountains to a grain of ſand, when compared with the particles of light.

E. I am glad to hear our breakfaſt-bell: for, if I ſhould hear more of theſe ſubjects at preſent, I know not but that I ſhould, for ſome time, loſe the power of thinking.

N. I had juſt done with the ſubject of light; but am ſorry to hear that you muſt go from home for a few days on a viſit. However, during your abſence, I intend to draw out two or three figures, in order to deſcribe the late tranſit of Venus to you by them: and give you ſome idea of the method by which the diſtances of the planets of the Sun were found, by obſervations made on that tranſit.

E. I am very much obliged to you, Sir, for the trouble you have taken, and are to take further, on my account: and ſhall return as ſoon as poſſible.—You know I could not refuſe Miſs *Goodall*'s invitation.

DIALOGUE IV.

On the Tranſit of VENUS, *June 6th*, 1761; *and how the diſtances of the* PLANETS *from the* SUN *were found thereby.*

Neander.

DEAR Siſter, I am very glad to ſee you again: I ſuppoſe you found Mr. and Mrs. *Goodall*, and their daughters, to be very agreeable company.

Eudoſia. Quite ſo, and I have ſpent three days very happily with them.

N. It was very obliging in Mr. *Goodall* and Miſs *Sophy* to ſee you ſafe home.

E. They would do it, for all that I could ſay: even though I told them, that the ſervant

Pl. III.

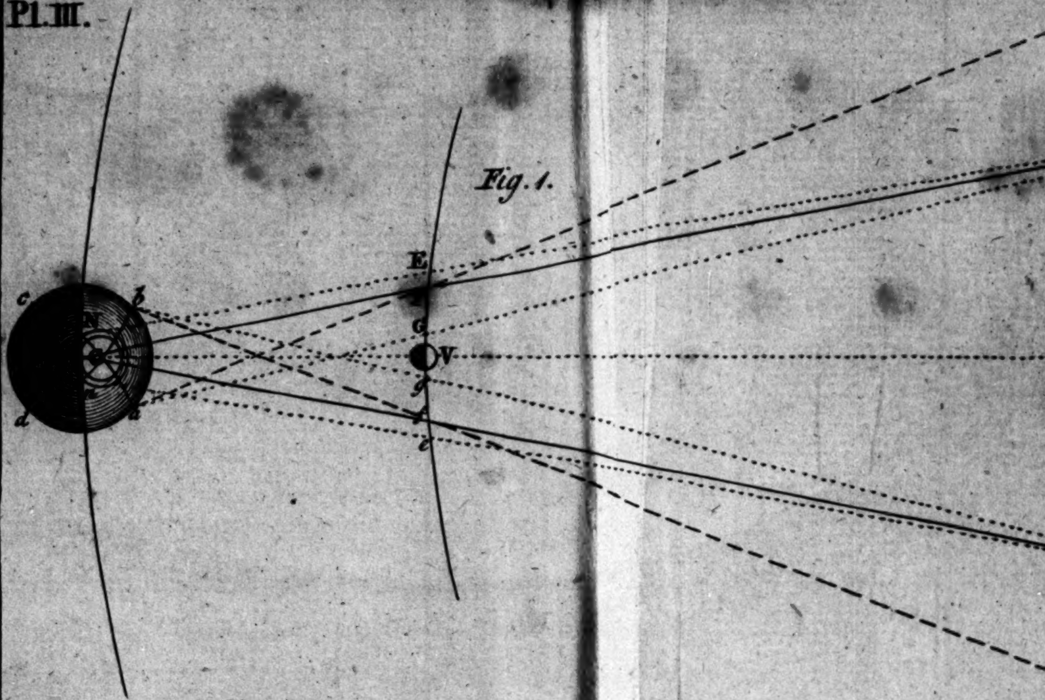


Fig. 1.

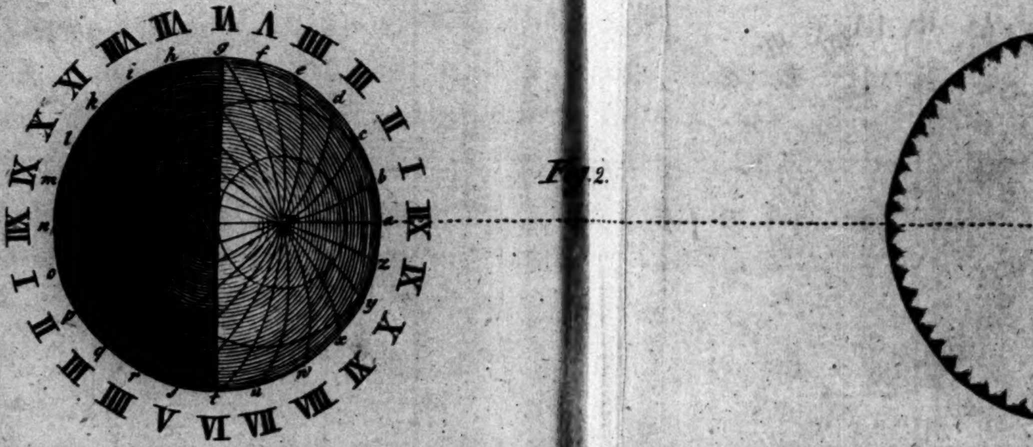
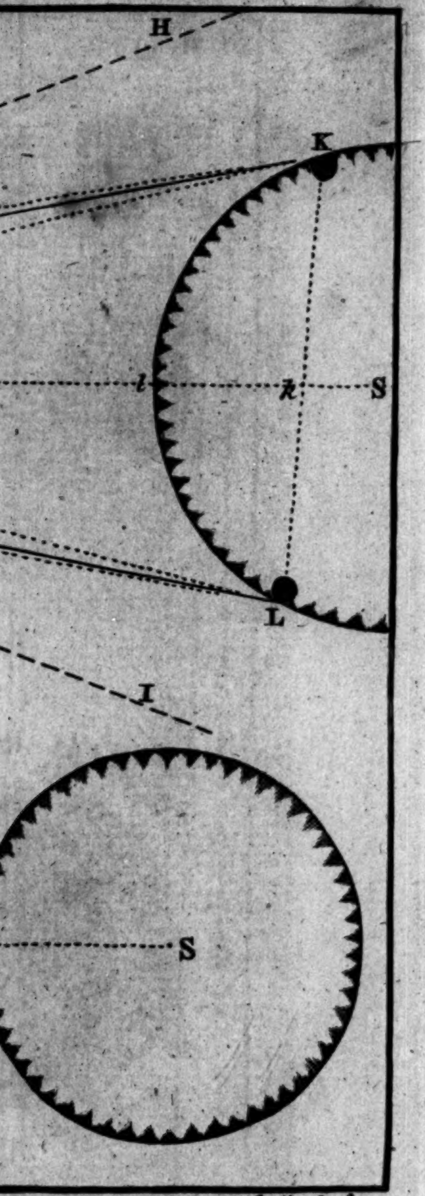


Fig. 2.

J. Ferguson delin.



J. Mynde sc.

ſervant who was ſent for me was very careful.

N. Mr. *Goodall* and I ſpent an hour together laſt night: and though he was full of his praiſes of your good ſenſe, he did not ſay one word about our aſtronomical converſations; by which, I imagine, you ſpoke nothing about them in that family. Yet I am far from doubting, that it would have been very agreeable if you had.

E. Truly, brother, if I had, you muſt have heard of it: and then I ſhould not have wondered if you had ſaid that I am not over-ſtocked with good ſenſe. I muſt know theſe things better before I begin to ſpeak of them; and even then, not to ſpeak, unleſs I am deſired by thoſe to whom I think the ſubject will be entertaining. You told me, the morning I went away, that our next converſation ſhould be on the tranſit of Venus; and how the diſtances of the planets from the Sun were found thereby.

N. And to ſhew you that I have not forgot my promiſe, here are the figures which I told you I would draw out for that purpoſe. (See PLATE II. *Fig.* 2. *and* 3. *and* PLATE III. *Fig.* 1.) But, in theſe delineations, we muſt often ſacrifice one truth to explain another; and in the preſent caſe it is unavoidable. For, if we were to make the bulks of the planets in our figure no greater than they are in proportion to their diſtances from the Sun, the planets would be mere points; and a large ſheet of paper would be too ſmall for the lengths of the lines of diſtances. So that, in order to make the preſent ſubject plain, we muſt enlarge the planets, and contract their diſtances from the Sun; otherwiſe we could not, at preſent, render the effects intelligible which ariſe from ſome of the planetary motions.

E. Very well, brother: pleaſe to proceed.

N. The diameter of the Earth is no more than a point in compariſon of its diſtance from the Sun; and therefore, if the Sun were viewed, at the ſame inſtant, by two obſervers on oppoſite ſides of the Earth, his center would appear to both of them to be in the ſame point of the heavens. But, when Venus is between the Earth and the Sun (as ſhe was at the time of her late tranſit), her diſtance from the Earth is between three and four times leſs than the Sun's diſtance from the Earth. And therefore, if Venus be then viewed by two obſervers on the Earth, who are at a great diſtance from one another, ſhe will appear to each of them, at the ſame inſtant, to be on different part of the Sun's ſurface. —Thus in *Fig*. 2. of PLATE II. let *S* be the Sun, *V* Venus, and *A B D E* the Earth. Let one obſerver be at *A*, another at *B*, and a third at *D*; all looking at Venus at the ſame moment of abſolute time. To the obſerver at *A*, Venus *(V)* will appear upon the Sun at *F*, as ſhe is ſeen in the right line *A V F:* to the obſerver at *B*, ſhe will appear upon the Sun at *G*, being ſeen by him in the right line *B V G:* and to the obſerver at *D*, Venus will appear upon the Sun at *H*, becauſe he ſees the planet in the right line *D V H.* Or, if you will ſuppoſe Venus to be at reſt at *V*, during the time that the obſerver at *A* is carried, by the Earth's motion on its axis, from *A* to *D*, through the arc *A B D*; it is plain, that, to this obſerver, the planet *V* will appear to be moved on the Sun from *F* to *H*, through the ſpace *F G H.*

Let us now ſuppoſe, that the Earth *a b d e* (*Fig.* 3.) is nearer the Sun *s* than as repreſented in *Fig.* 2. in which caſe, Venus *v* will be proportionably nearer the Earth; and the arc *a b d*, through which the obſerver is carried, will bear a greater proportion to the diſtance of Venus *v* from the Earth, in *Fig.* 3, than the ſame arc *A B D* (in *Fig.* 2.) bears to the diſtance of Venus *V* from the Earth. So that, if one obſerver ſhould be placed at *a*, another at *b*, and a third at *c*, the obſerver at *a*, would ſee Venus on the Sun at *f*, the obſerver at *b* would ſee her on the Sun at *g*, and the obſerver at *d* would ſee her on the Sun at *h*, all at the ſame inſtant of time. Or, if Venus kept at reſt at *v*, whilſt the obſerver at *a* was carried from *a* to *d* by the Earth's motion; Venus would, in that time, appear to him to have moved from *f* to *h* on the Sun. But the ſpace *f g h*, in *Fig.* 3, is longer than the ſpace *F G H* in *Fig.* 2. and therefore, the nearer the Earth is to the Sun, the greater will the ſpace be through which Venus appears to move upon the Sun, by the obſerver's real motion along with the Earth, in any given time: and the farther the Earth is from the Sun, the leſs will the ſpace be through which Venus appears to move upon the Sun, by the obſerver's real motion, in the ſame time.

And, conſequently, as Venus is really moving on in her orbit, in the direction of *T V W* (in *Fig.* 2.), or *t v w* (in *Fig.* 3.) whilſt the obſerver is carried by the Earth's motion on its axis from *A* to *D*, or from *a* to *d*; it is plain, that Venus will appear to move ſooner over the Sun, if the Earth's diſtance from the Sun be only *b v s* (as in *Fig.* 3.), than if it be *B V S* (as in *Fig*. 2.) So that the whole duration of her tranſit over the Sun muſt be ſhorter, if the Earth's diſtance from the Sun be only *b v s*, than if it be greater, as *B V S*.——Do you underſtand this, *Eudoſia?*

E. I think it is ſo plain, that any body might underſtand it.

N. Then we have done with theſe figures, and ſhall proceed to *Fig*. 1. of PLATE III. in which, let *a b c d e* be the Earth, *V* Venus, and *S* the Sun. The Earth turns eaſtward on its axis, in the direction *a b c d*; and Venus moves in her orbit in the direction *E V e*.

Now, ſuppoſe the Earth to be tranſparent like glaſs, and that you were placed at its center *C*, and kept looking at the Sun *S*, during the time in which Venus moves in her orbit from *F* to *f*, through the ſpace *F G V g f:* in this caſe, the Earth's motion on its axis could have no effect on your poſition, becauſe it could not carry you any way from *C*. Then, when Venus was at *F* in her orbit, ſhe would appear to you as at *K*, juſt within the Sun's ſurface, touching his eaſtern edge at *K*; that is, at her firſt internal contact with the Sun's eaſtern edge. As ſhe moves on, from *F* to *f* in her orbit, ſhe would appear to you to move on the Sun, from *K* to *L*, in the line *K k L*, which is called *the line of her tranſit over the Sun*. And when ſhe was at *f* in her orbit, ſhe would appear at *L* on the Sun, juſt beginning to leave his weſtern edge, or at her laſt internal contact with the Sun. Now, pleaſe to remember, that if Venus could be ſeen from the Earth's center *C*, ſhe would move from *F* to *f* in her orbit, in the time that ſhe would appear to move from *K* to *L* on the Sun; or from her firſt internal contact to her laſt.

E. A bare inſpection of the figure ſhews it: for, when Venus is at *F* in her orbit, ſhe would appear juſt within the Sun at *K*; becauſe then, as viewed from the Earth's center *C*, ſhe would be ſeen in the ſtraight line *C F K*; and when ſhe came to *f* in her orbit, ſhe would ſeem juſt beginning to leave the Sun at *L*, becauſe ſhe would be ſeen in the ſtraight line *C f L*.

N. Very well.—Now let us ſuppoſe, that an obſerver is placed on the Earth's ſurface at *a*; and that he is carried from *a* to *b*, by the Earth's motion on its axis, in the time that Venus moves in her orbit from *F* to *f*.

When Venus is at *F*, ſhe appears at *K* on the Sun, as ſeen from the Earth's center *C*; but to the obſerver at *a* ſhe will not appear to be then entered upon the Sun; becauſe (if ſhe were then viſible in the ſky) ſhe would be ſeen in the line *A F H*, eaſtward from the Sun; and muſt move on from *F* to *G* in her orbit, before the obſerver at *a* can ſee her on the Sun at *K*, in the right line *a G K*. So that her tranſit will begin as much later to the obſerver at *a*, than it does to the obſerver at *C*, as ſhe is in moving from *F* to *G* in her orbit.

When Venus comes to *g* in her orbit, the obſerver will be carried by the Earth's motion almoſt from *a b*; and then he will ſee her in the line *c f L*, juſt beginning to leave the Sun at *L*; but ſhe muſt move on from *g* to *f* in her orbit, before ſhe begins to leave the Sun at *L*, as ſeen from the Earth's center *C*, in the right (or ſtraight) line *C f L*; and then, to the obſerver at *b*, ſhe will appear quite clear of the Sun to the Weſt, in the line *B f I*. So that the whole duration of the tranſit from *K* to *L* on the Sun, will be ſhorter, as ſeen by the obſerver in motion from *a* to *c*, than as ſeen by the (ſuppoſed) obſerver at reſt at the Earth's center *C*. For, to the former, ſhe will move only from *G* to *g* in her orbit, during the time ſhe appears to move from *K* to *L* on the Sun: whereas, to the latter, ſhe muſt move from *F* to *f* in her orbit, in the time ſhe appears to paſs over the Sun from *K* to *L*.

The nearer the Earth is to the Sun, the greater will the difference of the durations of the tranſit be, from *K* to *L* on the Sun, as ſeen from the Earth's ſurface and from its center: and the farther the Earth is from the Sun, the leſs will the difference between the durations of the tranſit be, as ſeen from the earth's ſurface and from its center, accordingly.

E. Certainly ſo, by what you already told me in your explanation of the ſecond and third figures of the ſecond *Plate*. For, the nearer the Earth is to the Sun, the nearer alſo in proportion it muſt be to Venus; and the farther it is from the Sun, the farther alſo it muſt be from Venus. So that the ſpace through which the obſerver is carried by the Earth's motion from *a* to *b* (PLATE III. *Fig.* 1), will bear a greater proportion to the diſtance of Venus from the earth in the former caſe than in the latter: and ſo, will affect the times of durations of the tranſit, as ſeen from the Earth's center and from its ſurface, accordingly.——But I ſhould be glad to know, why you ſuppoſe an obſerver to be placed at the Earth's center, as it is a thing impoſſible to be done: and if he was there, he could neither ſee the Sun nor Venus.

N. Becauſe the motions of the planets are calculated in the aſtronomical tables, as if ſeen by an obſerver at reſt. And, as the apparent breadth of the Sun is known, and the time of Venus's going round the Sun is alſo kown; the time of her appearing to move through a ſpace equal to the Sun's breadth, as ſeen by an obſerver at reſt, is eaſily calculated, and is the ſame as would be obſerved by a perſon placed at reſt at the center of the Earth. And then, at all kinds of diſtance of the Earth from the Sun, it is eaſier to calculate how much the duration of the tranſit would be ſhortened by the motion of an obſerver on the Earth's ſurface, on the ſide of the Earth next to Venus, and who is then moving in a contrary direction to the motion of Venus in her orbit, than the duration of the tranſit would be to an obſerver at the Earth's center, or even on its ſurface if the Earth had no motion on its axis; in which caſe, the obſerver on the ſurface would be at reſt. But as that obſerver is really in motion with the Earth, when the duration of the tranſit is obſerved by him, and, conſequently, known how much ſhorter it appeared to him, than it would have done if he had been at reſt; the diſtance of the Earth from the Sun may thereby be found: which, as I told you already, is thereupon computed to be 95,173,000 Engliſh miles.

E. The diſtance of the Earth from the Sun, in miles, being known, I ſhould be glad to know how you find the diſtances of all the other planets from the Sun. For we cannot ſend people from the Earth to thoſe planets, to obſerve tranſits.

N. I told you already, in our ſecond dialogue, that the relative or comparative diſtances of all the planets from the Sun are known long ago, both by the ſtated laws of nature, and by obſervation; and that they are as follows:

If we ſuppoſe the Earth's diſtance from the Sun to be divided into 100,000 equal parts (let theſe parts contain how many miles they will), Mercury's diſtance from the Sun muſt be equal to 38,710 of theſe parts; Venus's diſtance, 72,333; Mars's diſtance, 152,369; Jupiter's, 520,096; and Saturn's diſtance, 954,006.

Now, as the number of miles is in proportion to the number of parts, and the 100,000 parts by which the Earth is diſtant from the Sun, contain 95,173,000 miles; we ſay, by the rule of three, as 100,000 parts are to 95,173,000 miles; ſo are 38,710, Mercury's diſtance from the Sun in parts, to 36,841,468, his diſtance from the Sun in miles. So are 72,333, Venus's diſtance from the Sun in parts, to 68,891,486, her diſtance from the Sun in miles. So likewiſe are 152,369, Mars's diſtance from the Sun in parts, to 145,014,148, his diſtance from the Sun in miles. And ſo are 520,096, Jupiter's diſtance from the Sun in parts, to 494,990,976, his diſtance from the Sun in miles. And, laſtly (carrying on the proportions), ſo are 954,006, Saturn's diſtance from the Sun in parts, to 907,956,130, his diſtance from the Sun in miles.

E. I thank you, brother, for having explained the whole of this matter ſo much to my ſatisfaction. But I have heard that the late tranſit was obſerved by people at very different parts of the Earth.——Pray did you find, that all the obſervations (as you got accounts of them) agreed ſo well, as to give all the ſame concluſion?

N. I cannot ſay they did, ſo nearly as we could wiſh; which might have been owing to two cauſes. Firſt, that the differences of longitude (as it is called) between many places where thoſe obſervations were made, are not yet well aſcertained: and ſecondly, that all the obſervers did not uſe teleſcopes of an equal magnifying power, which they ſhould have agreed to do before-hand. And undoubtedly, they who uſed the higheſt magnifying teleſcopes, could more accurately determine the inſtants of Venus's two internal contacts with the Sun, than thoſe could who uſed ſmaller magnifying teleſcopes. But it is to be hoped, that all proper care will be taken, in obſerving the tranſit on the 3d of June 1769. And aſtronomers will do well to make the moſt and beſt of it they can; as there will not be another tranſit in leſs than 105 years afterward.

E. How can *that* be?—For as the Earth goes round the Sun in a year, and Venus in 225 days; I ſhould think, that

Venus would paſs between the Earth and the Sun once every two years at moſt.

N. So ſhe would, once in every 584 days, if her orbit lay in the ſame plane with the Earth's orbit, like one circle made within another on a flat paper. But one half of Venus's orbit lies on the North ſide of the plane of the Earth's orbit; and the other half on the South ſide of it: ſo that her orbit only croſſes the Earth's orbit in two oppoſite points. And therefore, Venus can only paſs directly between the Earth and the Sun, when, at the times of her conjunctions with the Sun, ſhe is either in or near one or other of thoſe points. At all other times, ſhe either paſſes above or below the Sun, and is then inviſible, on account of her dark ſide being toward the Earth. But its being ſo alſo, at the time of her late tranſit, made her very conſpicuous on the Sun, like a black patch on a circular piece of white paper. At her laſt tranſit, ſhe paſſed below the Sun's center, about a third part of the

Sun's breadth; and at her next, ſhe will paſs as far above it.

E. I underſtand this thoroughly.—But, I think, there are ſome lines in the figure (PLATE III. *Fig.* 1.) which you have not yet explained.

N. Then, ſhew me them, and I will.

E. They are the lines *N E K* and *n e L*.

N. True: I had almoſt forgot them. Suppoſe an obſerver at *N*, on the ſide of the Earth fartheſt from Venus, to be carried from *N* to *n* in the ſame direction with Venus's motion in her orbit from *E* to *e*, in the ſame time that an obſerver at *a* is carried from *a* to *b*, in a contrary direction to the motion of Venus in her orbit: the duration of the tranſit will be longer, as ſeen by the obſerver who is carried from *N* to *n*, than it would be to an obſerver at reſt at the Earth's center *C*. For, when Venus is in her orbit at *E*, ſhe will appear upon the Sun at *K*, as ſeen from *N* in the right line *N E K*; but ſhe muſt go on from *E* to *F* before ſhe can be ſeen from

C, upon the Sun, in the right line *C F K*: and, as ſeen from *C*, in the right line *C f L*, ſhe will appear as juſt beginning to leave the Sun at *L*, when ſhe is at *f* in her orbit. But ſhe muſt move on, from *f* to *e*, before ſhe can appear as beginning to leave the Sun, when ſeen by the obſerver at *n*, who is carried from *N* to *n* by the Earth's motion on its axis, in the time of Venus's moving from *E* to *e* in her orbit. So that the viſible duration of the tranſit will be longer as ſeen by an obſerver who is carried from *N* to *n*, than it would be to an obſerver at reſt; and ſhorter, as ſeen by an obſerver who is carried from *a* to *b*. And the difference between theſe viſible durations will be of greater advantage towards finding the Earth's diſtance from the Sun, than what could be gained only from obſervations made on the ſide of the Earth which is neareſt to Venus, during the time of her tranſit.

E. Pray, who was it that firſt thought of this method of finding the diſtances of the planets from the Sun? I imagine he muſt have been a very great aſtronomer.

N. He was ſo indeed; the man who firſt propoſed this method was the great Doctor HALLEY. And as he was morally certain, that, according to the common courſe of nature, he could not live to ſee that tranſit, he moſt earneſtly recommended it to future aſtronomers, that they might obſerve it when he was dead. And, in order to furniſh them with all proper information, he gave in a paper on the ſubject to the Royal Society; which paper was, ſoon after, publiſhed in the Philoſophical Tranſactions.

DIALOGUE V.

On the Method of finding the LATITUDES *and* LONGITUDES *of* PLACES.

Neander.

GOOD-morrow, ſiſter: —— you have been later than uſual of coming this morning.—What is the matter? You look pale.

Eudoſia. I was taken ill laſt night about twelve, of an aſthma, which frightened me, as I never was ſo before; and kept me awake till five o'clock this morning. Then it left me, and I fell aſleep, and have quite over-ſleeped my time; for now it is eight o'clock.

N. Why did you not ring your bell, in order that ſomething might have been brought to relieve you? eſpecially as you know that our mother (among many other good medicines) always keeps an electuary of honey, powder of liquorice, of elecampane, ſeeds of aniſe, and flowers of ſulphur; which is exceeding good for that diſorder, and has cured many of it.

E. I was loth to ſurpriſe any body in the night, eſpecially as the aſthma did not continue long violent.—I raiſed my head a good deal; ſo it left me gradually; and now I feel nothing of it.

N. I am very glad of *that*.—But I think it would be quite wrong to enter upon any ſuch ſubject this morning, as we have already been about. And therefore, I hope you do not come now with any ſuch intention.

E. Indeed I do, if it were but to take off my drowſineſs: and I feel no other ailment at preſent.

N. Well then;—with what ſubject ſhall I entertain you this morning?

E. I heard you yeſterday, for the firſt time, mention the *Longitudes of places.* But as I ſcarce know what either *Longitude* or *Latitude* means, I ſhould be glad to know: eſpecially as we have heard ſo much lately about the finding the Longitude. And as I never heard of any difficulty about finding the Latitude, I imagine, the latter is much more eaſily found than the former.

N. It is ſo indeed, ſiſter.

E. What is the reaſon of that?——But I believe my queſtion is premature: for I ſhould have aſked firſt, what thoſe terms mean?

N. Right, *Eudoſia*; and now I will inform you.——*Every circle,* be it great or ſmall, is divided (or ſuppoſed to be divided) into 360 equal parts, called *Degrees.* Now, if we take a great circle round the Earth, which divides the Earth into two equal parts, every degree of that circle contains 69¼ Engliſh miles; as is the caſe with the degrees of the equator, and nearly ſo with thoſe of a great circle taken round the Earth, through the North and South poles.

The *Latitude* of a place is the number of degrees that the place is from the Equator, towards the North or South pole: and is denominated *North* or *South*, as the given place is on the North or South ſide of the Equator.——Thus, in the little globe (*Fig.* 1. of PLATE I.), all the places in the northern hemiſphere, from every point of the equator to the North pole, have North Latitude: and all the places from every point of the equator to the South pole, have South Latitude. As the poles are the fartheſt points of the Earth from the equator, they have the greateſt Latitude; which is 90 degrees, or a fourth part of 360, the whole circumference of the globe.

The North and South points, or poles of the Heaven, are directly over the North and South poles of the Earth. And therefore, as the Earth turns round its axis, which terminates in its North and South poles, every point of its ſurface is carried round in twenty-four hours, except its poles, which are at reſt. This motion of the Earth will cauſe an apparent motion of every point of the Heaven, in a direction contrary to the Earth's motion, excepting its poles, which appear always at reſt; becauſe they are directly over the poles of the Earth, which are at reſt.

E. May I put in a word juſt now, before you proceed farther?

N. Why not?

E. I ſhould think that the poles of the Heaven would change among the ſtars, on account of the Earth's motion round the Sun in a year. For, undoubtedly, if the Earth's axis (or line on which it turns round every twenty-four hours) were produced to the Heaven, it would deſcribe a circle therein, equal in diameter to that of its whole orbit; which you have already told me is 190 millions of miles.

N. And ſo it does.—But if it ſhould, by its track, make as dark a circle in the Heaven, as can be made with ink by a pair of compaſſes on paper, the diſtance of the ſtarry Heaven is ſo great from us, that a circle therein of 190 millions of miles in diameter, would not appear to us ſo big as the ſmalleſt dott you can poſſibly make with a fine pen upon paper. Which ſhews, that if the Earth were as big as would fill its whole orbit, it would appear no bigger than a dimenſionleſs point, if ſeen from the ſtars. For, notwithſtanding the Earth's conſtantly changing its place in its orbit, the poles of the Heaven could never be perceived to change their places, a ſingle viſible point, even when obſerved with the niceſt inſtruments. And therefore, we always conſider the poles of the Heaven to be fixed points; and to keep conſtantly juſt over the poles of the Earth.

E. You have ſatisfied me entirely on this head; and, at the ſame time, convinced me, that the diſtance of the ſtars muſt be inconceivably great. Now, pleaſe to proceed.

N. Let us ſuppoſe a great circle to be drawn round the Heaven, through its

North and South poles, and to be divided into 360 degrees, like a circle drawn round the Earth through *its* North and South poles.

As the Earth is but a point in compariſon to the diſtance of the ſtarry Heaven; let us be on what part of the Earth we will, we ſee juſt one half of the Heaven, if the horizon, or limit of our view all around, be not intercepted by hills. And as the poles of the Heaven are directly over the poles of the Earth; ſo the equinoctial in the Heaven is directly over the Earth's equator, all around.

Now, as the Earth is round, and the Heaven appears to us to be round like the concave ſurface of a great ſphere or hollow globe; it is plain, that if we were at the Earth's equator, the equinoctial in the Heaven would be over our heads; and the North and South points, or poles of the Heaven, would appear to be in the North and South points of our horizon, or limit of view. But if we go one degree from the equator, towards either the North or South pole of the Earth, the like pole of the Heaven would appear to be one degree elevated above our horizon, becauſe we would ſee a degree of the Heaven below it; and the contrary pole of the Heaven would be one degree hid below the limit of our view.—If we go two degrees from the equator, the pole will appear to be two degrees elevated above our horizon; and ſo on, till we go to either of the Earth's poles, 90 degrees from the equator; and then, the like pole of the Heaven would be juſt over our head, or 90 degrees above our horizon; which is the greateſt elevation it can have, as ſeen from any part of the Earth. And as the number of degrees we are from the Earth's equator is called our Latitude, ſo the number of degrees of the elevation of the celeſtial pole is equal thereto. At London, the North pole of the Heaven is elevated 51½ degrees above the horizon; which ſhews, that London has 51½ degrees of North Latitude from the equator. And as Latitude begins at the equator, the places thereon have no Latitude at all.

E. But how can you tell by what number of degrees the pole is elevated? for there is no viſible circle in the Heaven divided into degrees, to reckon by.

N. But we have an inſtrument called a Quadrant, which is a quarter of a circle, drawn on a plate of metal, and divided into ninety degrees; and it has a plumb line with a weight hanging from its center, which line always hangs toward the Earth's center, when allowed to hang freely. And if we look at the pole along one of the ſtraight edges of the quadrant, the other edge will be as many degrees from the plumb line, as are equal to the number of degrees of the pole's elevation above the horizon of our place.—— And, by that means, the elevation of the pole, and conſequently the latitude of the place, is known.

E. Is there a ſtar fixed exactly in the North pole, by which means you can know by ſight where *that* pole is?

N. No: but there is a ſtar of the ſecond magnitude, about two degrees from the North pole, and it is called *the Pole-ſtar.* And as the Earth's motion on its axis cauſeth an apparent motion of all the ſtars round the poles of the Heaven; the pole-ſtar appears to us to deſcribe a circle, of four degrees diameter, round the pole itſelf, every 24 hours. And therefore, if we ſubſtract two degrees from the greateſt obſerved height of the pole ſtar, or add two degrees to the leaſt obſerved height thereof: the reſult gives the elevation of the pole at the place of obſervation.

As the North pole is elevated 51½ degrees above the horizon of London, all thoſe ſtars which are within 51½ of that pole never ſet below the horizon of London. And therefore, if the greateſt and leaſt altitudes of any of theſe ſtars be taken with a quadrant, half the difference of theſe altitudes being added to the leaſt, or ſubſtracted from the greateſt, gives the elevation of the pole above the horizon.

And thus, we can very eaſily and accurately find the Latitude of any place, by means of any ſtar which never ſets below the horizon of that place.

The Latitude of any place may alſo be found by the Sun's altitude at noon, on any day of the year, quite independent of the ſtars.—I will firſt endeavour to ſhew you the reaſon of this, and then ſhew you the method.

The Equinoctial in the Heaven is directly over the Equator on the Earth. And juſt as many degrees as the Latitude of any given place is from the Equator, ſo many degrees is the point of the Heaven, which is over the place, from the Equinoctial. Conſequently, if we can find how many degrees the point of the Heaven, which is directly over our place, is from the Equinoctial, we thereby find how many degrees our place is from the Equator; or our Latitude.

The Sun is in the Equinoctial twice every year; namely, on the 20th of March, and 23d of September; and then he is directly over the Earth's Equator, From the 20th of March to the 23d of September, the Sun is on the North ſide of the Equinoctial, and from the 23d of September to the 20th of March, he is on the South ſide of it. The number of degrees that the Sun is from the Equinoctial, on any day of the year, is called *the Sun's Declination* for that day; and is denominated *North* or *South*, as the Sun is on the *North* or *South* ſide of the Equinoctial.——So that, *Declination* in the Heaven, is the ſame as *Latitude* on the Earth.

There are tables, ready calculated, which ſhew what the Sun's declination is, at the noon of every day of the year; as it is North or South on that day.—And the point of the Heaven which is directly over any place, is ninety degrees above the horizon of that place.

Now, to find the Latitude of the place, as ſuppoſe London, which is on the North ſide of the Equator; obſerve the Sun's altitude at noon, by means of a quadrant, on any day of the year: and then, if, by the tables, you find the

Sun's declination to be North on that day, ſubſtract the declination from the Sun's meridian altitude (that is, from his height at mid-day, as found by the quadrant), and the remainder will be the height of the Equinoctial; which height being ſubſtracted from 90 degrees, will give the Latitude of the place.

Thus, on the 21ſt of June, the tables ſhew us, that the Sun's declination is 23½ degrees North; and if the Sun's altitude be obſerved with a quadrant on the noon of that day, the altitude will be found to be juſt 62 degrees. Now ſubſtract 23½ degrees from 62, and the remainder will be 38½ degrees for the height or elevation of the higheſt point of the Equinoctial above the horizon of London; which height being ſubſtracted from 90 degrees, leaves remaining 51½ degrees for the Latitude of London.

If the Sun's declination be South, add its quantity to the Sun's obſerved altitude at noon, and the ſum will be the elevation of the higheſt point of the Equinoctial above the horizon of the place; which elevation being ſubſtracted from 90 degrees, will leave a remainder equal to the Latitude of the place.

Thus, on the 21ſt of December, the tables ſhew us, that the Sun's declination is 23½ degrees South: and if his altitude at noon be taken at London on that day by a quadrant, it will be found to be juſt 15 degrees; which being added to 23½ degrees of South declination, gives 38½ degrees for the height of the Equinoctial, which height, being ſubſtracted from 90 degrees, leaves 51½ remaining, for the Latitude of London, as before.—Do you underſtand all this, *Eudoſia*?

E. I think I do, on account of the reaſons you have given for the proceſs.—But I will conſider it by and by; and then tell you if I find any difficulty.

N. Do ſo; and now we will talk about the Longitude. The curve lines which you ſee drawn on the globe, from pole to pole (PLATE I. *Fig.* 1.) are called *Meridians*;

and each of them is a meridian to every place through which it paſſes; becauſe when it comes even with the Sun, by the turning of the globe on its axis, the Sun is then at the greateſt height, as ſeen from all places on that meridian; and conſequently, it is then mid-day or noon to each of them.—There are only 24 meridian ſemicircles on the globe, at equal diſtances from each other; but we may ſuppoſe the whole ſpaces between them to be filled up with other ſuch meridians, becauſe every place, which is ever ſo little to the Eaſt or Weſt from the meridian of any given place, has a different meridian from *that* of the given place.

The whole circumference of the Equator is divided into 360 equal parts or degrees: and the Engliſh aſtronomers and geographers begin (what they call) the Longitude, at the meridian of London, and thence reckon the Longitudes of other places to the Eaſt or Weſt, as the meridians of thoſe places lie Eaſt or Weſt from the meridian of London.

So

So that the Longitude of any place, Eaſt or Weſt of the meridian of London, is equal to the number of degrees intercepted between the meridian of that place and the meridian of London; according to the Engliſh way of reckoning. Thus, a meridian drawn through *Copenhagen*, in *Denmark*, would cut the Equator 13 degrees eaſtward of that point where the meridian of London cuts it; and a meridian drawn through *Philadelphia*, in North America, would cut the Equator 74 degrees weſtward of the point where the meridian of London cuts it: and therefore we ſay, the Longitude of *Copenhagen* is 13 degrees Eaſt from the meridian of London (which is termed *the firſt* meridian by the Engliſh), and the Longitude of *Philadelphia* is 74 degrees Weſt.

All people, who know what *Latitude* and *Longitude* mean, reckon Latitude to begin at the Equator, that they may find the Latitude by the elevation of the pole above the horizon.—But, as they may begin the Longitude at the meridian of any place; I ſuppoſe moſt nations reckon the Longitude of all other places from the meridian of the principal city of their own kingdom or nation.

E. Why is it ſo difficult a matter to find the Longitude of any place, from the meridian of any other place, in compariſon of finding the Latitude?

N. Becauſe we have a fixt point, or pole, in the Heaven, which ſhews us our Latitude by its elevation above the horizon of our place: but there is no viſible meridian in the Heaven, to keep directly over the meridian of any place on the Earth.—If there were ſuch a meridian, the Longitudes of all other places from it might be as eaſily found, by its elevation above their horizons, as their Latitudes are found by the elevation of the pole, or by the declination of the Sun from the Equator.

E. I underſtand you perfectly well.—But, pray, what are the beſt methods that have been yet propoſed for finding the Longitude?

N. The beſt method, in theory, is by a machine that will meaſure time exactly, ſo as to go as true at ſea, as a good clock does on land.

E. Pleaſe to explain this.

N. The Earth's circumference is 360 degrees; and as it turns round its axis eaſtward every 24 hours, it turns 15 degrees every hour: for, 24 times 15 is 360. Therefore, every place whoſe meridian is 15 degrees Eaſt of the meridian of London, will have noon, and every other hour, one hour ſooner than it is ſo at the meridian of London. Every place whoſe meridian is 30 degrees eaſtward of the meridian of London, will have noon, and every other hour, two hours ſooner than it is ſo at the meridian of London, and ſo on: the time always differing one hour for every 15 degrees of Longitude. On the contrary, every place whoſe meridian is 15 degrees Weſt from the meridian of London, will have noon, and every other hour, one hour later than it ſo is at the meridian of London; and every place whoſe meridian is

30 degrees Weſt from the meridian of London, will have noon, and every other hour, two hours later than it is ſo at the meridian of London; and ſo on.

E. Although this ſeems plain, I ſhould be glad to have it illuſtrated by a figure.

N. And here is one (*Fig.* 2. of PLATE III.) ready for you; in which, let *S* be the Sun, *a b c d e f*, &c. the Earth, turning eaſtward round its axis, in 24 hours, according to the order of the letters. Let *P* be the North pole of the Earth, and *a P*, *b P*, *c P*, *d P*, &c. be as much of 24 meridian ſemicircles as can be ſhewn in the figure, at 15 degrees diſtance from each other: and ſuppoſe *a P* to be the meridian of London.

Then, whichever ſide of the Earth is at any time turned toward the Sun, it will be *day* on that ſide, and *night* on the other; as expreſſed by the *light* and ſhaded parts of the Earth in the figure. And, as it muſt be XII o'clock at noon on any meridian which is turned toward the Sun, at any moment of abſolute time, becauſe *that* meridian will then be in the middle of the enlightened half of the Earth, as on the meridian *P a*; it is plain that it will be twelve o'clock at night, at the ſame inſtant, on the oppoſite meridian *n P*, becauſe it is then in the middle of the dark; VI o'clock in the morning on the meridian *t P*, and VI in the evening on the meridian *g P*; and ſo, all the intermediate hours, on the intermediate meridians, at the very inſtant when it is noon on the meridian *P a*. So that, ſuppoſing *P a* to be the meridian of London, it is plain, that when it is XII o'clock *there*, it will be I o'clock in the afternoon on the meridian *P b*, becauſe *that* meridian is paſt by the Sun 15 degrees, or one hour, to the eaſtward; II o'clock in the afternoon on the meridian *P c*; III o'clock on the meridian *P d*; and ſo on. But, it can only be XI in the forenoon, on the meridian *P z*; when it is noon on the meridian *P a*; becauſe *P z* is then an hour ſhort of being even with the Sun: X o'clock in the forenoon on the meridian *P y*; becauſe that meridian wants two hours of being even with the Sun, and ſo on.

Now, as every maſter of a ſhip knows how to find the time of the day at the place of his ſhip, by the height of the Sun; or the time of the night by the height of any given ſtar that revolves at a good diſtance from either of the celeſtial poles; if he firſt finds the Latitude of the place of his ſhip: he may find the Longitude of that place in the following manner, if he can depend upon the true going of his watch.

Before he ſets out from any port, as ſuppoſe from London, let him ſet his watch to the exact time at *that* port; and then, let him ſail where he will, his watch will always ſhew him what the time is at that port from which he ſet out.

Now, ſuppoſe him to be at ſea, on his way to the Weſt-Indies; and that he has ſailed from London at *a* as far weſtward as *x*, and then wants to find the Longitude of the place of his ſhip at *x*. He firſt finds the Latitude of the place *x*, and then, by the altitude of the Sun, finds the time at that place, which we ſhall ſuppoſe to be IX o'clock in the morning: he then looks at his watch, which ſhews the time at London, on the meridian *P a*; and finds that it is XII o'clock at noon on the meridian of London. By this he knows, that he is three hours to the Weſt of London; and as every hour of time anſwers to 15 degrees of Longitude, he finds that the meridian of the place of his ſhip is 3 times 15, or 45 degrees Weſt from the meridian of London. And, as every hour anſwers to 15 degrees of Longitude, ſo every four minutes anſwers to one degree. If he had been as far eaſtward (as at *d)* from the meridian of London, he would have found it to be III o'clock in the afternoon at the place of his ſhip, when his watch would have ſhewn him that it was then only mid-day at London: and ſo, in *that* caſe, he would have known that the Longitude of his ſhip was 45 degrees Eaſt from the meridian of London.

E. This appears to me to be a very rational and eaſy method of finding the

Longitude, if a watch can be made that will keep exact time at ſea.—Pray, has there ever been ſuch a watch made, ſo as that it can be depended upon? for otherwiſe I ſhould think it very dangerous; becauſe, for every four minutes that it would either gain or loſe, it would cauſe an error of a whole degree in reckoning the Longitude.

N. Mr. *Harriſon* has ſucceeded the beſt of any who ever yet attempted to make ſuch a watch. But *that* watch has been found not to keep time quite ſo exactly as was expected, after ſome months trial at the Royal Obſervatory at Greenwich. Yet it muſt be acknowledged that Mr. *Harriſon* has very great merit, and deſerves the reward he has got for his ingenuity: and many are of opinion, that he can ſtill make a watch that will meaſure time more exactly than the one which has been already tried (and for which he has got the reward), as it is the only one he ever made.

Another method (and which is a very ſure one) for finding the Longitude, has been practiſed for many years: and *that* is, by the eclipſes of Jupiter's ſatellites; but it is attended with two inconveniences; firſt, as it requires the teleſcope to be quite ſteady, by which thoſe eclipſes are obſerved, it cannot be put in practice at ſea, on account of the unſteadineſs of the ſhip: and ſecondly, no obſervations of theſe eclipſes can be made in the day-time, becauſe Jupiter is not then viſible.

E. But I ſhould think it muſt ſtill be very uſeful in finding the Longitudes of places on the land, where the teleſcope may be kept quite ſteady.—Pray, explain the method by which the Longitude has been thus found.

N. The Engliſh aſtronomers have calculated tables which ſhew the times of thoſe eclipſes, all the year round, on the meridian of London; and the French have done the like for the meridian of Paris.—Now, ſuppoſe an Engliſhman to be at *Kingſton* in *Jamaica*, and that he obſerves either of Jupiter's moons to be eclipſed juſt at One o'clock in the morning:

ing: he looks at the tables, to ſee at what time the ſame eclipſe is on the meridian of London; and finds the time *there* to be at 8 minutes after VI in the morning. The difference of the times, as reckoned at *London* and at *Kingſton* in Jamaica, is thus found to be 5 hours 8 minutes, or 308 minutes; which being divided by 4 (becauſe 4 minutes of time anſwer to one degree of Longitude), quotes 77 for the number of degrees by which the meridian of Kingſton is weſt from the meridian of London: and thus he finds, that Kingſton is in 77 degrees of Weſt Longitude from London.

E. You have explained theſe matters very fully; and I thank you for it.

N. I thought to have done it in much fewer words; and am afraid I have quite tired you this morning, as you cannot be very well after having ſuch a bad night.

E. But I am quite well now, brother; and you have finiſhed in very good time, as the bell juſt rings for breakfaſt.

DIALOGUE VI.

On the CAUSES *of the different lengths of* DAYS *and* NIGHTS, *the viciſſitudes of* SEASONS, *and the various phaſes of the* MOON.

Neander.

I AM very glad to ſee you ſo early this morning, *Eudoſia.*—I hope you reſted well laſt night, and had no return of your late complaint.

Eudoſia. I ſlept very well from ten o'clock till five; and am quite well.

N. I am very glad to hear it.—What ſubject do you propoſe for us to enter upon, this morning?

E. I ſhould be glad to know the reaſon why the days and nights are of different lengths at different times of the year. For, although it is plain, that the turning of the Earth round its axis once every 24 hours, muſt cauſe a continual ſucceſſion of day and night in that time; the ſame as if the Earth were at reſt, and the Sun moved round it in 24 hours; I do not underſtand the reaſon why the days and nights are continually varying in their lengths, unleſs it were by a particular motion of the Sun northward and ſouthward, acroſs the Equator, in a year.——But, from what you have already told me, it appears plain, by the ſtated laws of nature, that the Sun cannot have any ſuch motion.

N. Indeed he cannot.—And you ſhall ſoon ſee the reaſon of the different lengths of days and nights, and of all the four ſeaſons of the year, without any motion of the Sun northward and ſouthward acroſs the Equator.—Pleaſe to light *that* candle, by way of a Sun, and ſet it upon the table, whilſt I ſhut the windows; ſo that we may have no light in the room but from the candle.

E. There it is, brother.

N. Now, I put a wire axis through our ſmall three inch globe, ſo as to reach a little way out from its ſurface in the North and South poles.——I move the globe round the flame of the candle, keeping it always at the ſame height from the table, and its axis perpendicular to the table: and you ſee that the candle is always even with the Equator of the globe, and enlightens it juſt from pole to pole.

E. Exactly ſo.

N. And that one half of the globe is enlightened by the candle, whilſt the other half is not: and conſequently, that it appears as if it were *day* on the ſide of the globe next the candle, and *night* on the oppoſite ſide.

E. Very plain.

N. I now turn the globe round its axis many times during the time I move it round the candle as before; and you ſee that every part of its ſurface, from the North pole to the South, goes equally through the light and ſhade. So that, if the globe was turned round its axis once every 24 hours, and carried round about the candle once in a year, every point of its ſurface from pole to pole, would be twelve hours in the light, and twelve hours in the dark.

E. Undoubtedly it would.

N. Then, you ſee, that ſuppoſing the candle to have no motion from one ſide of the Equator to the other, and the axis of the globe to keep perpendicular to its orbit, and its whole courſe round the candle, the days and nights could never vary in their length.

E. Self-evident.

N. I now incline the North pole of the axis a little toward the candle, and turn the globe round its axis.—You now ſee that the candle ſhines as far over the North pole as the axis of the globe is inclined toward the candle; and that all thoſe places of the northern hemiſphere which go through the dark, go through leſs of it than they do of the light; ſo that their days are longer than their nights: and the candle, being on the North ſide of the Equator, ſhines as far ſhort of the South pole, as it ſhines over the North pole: and conſequently, all the places on the ſouthern hemiſphere of the globe, which go through the light, go through a leſs portion of it than they do of the dark; and ſo have their days ſhorter than their nights.

But make the North pole of the axis decline from the candle, and turn the globe round its axis; the candle will not enlighten the globe to the North pole, but it will ſhine round the South pole. And now, all the northern places of the globe which go through the light, go through leſs of it than they do of the dark; ſo that the days are ſhorter than the nights on the North ſide of the Equator, and the contrary on the South ſide of it.— You now ſee, that turning the poles of the Earth alternately, more or leſs, toward

Pl. IV.

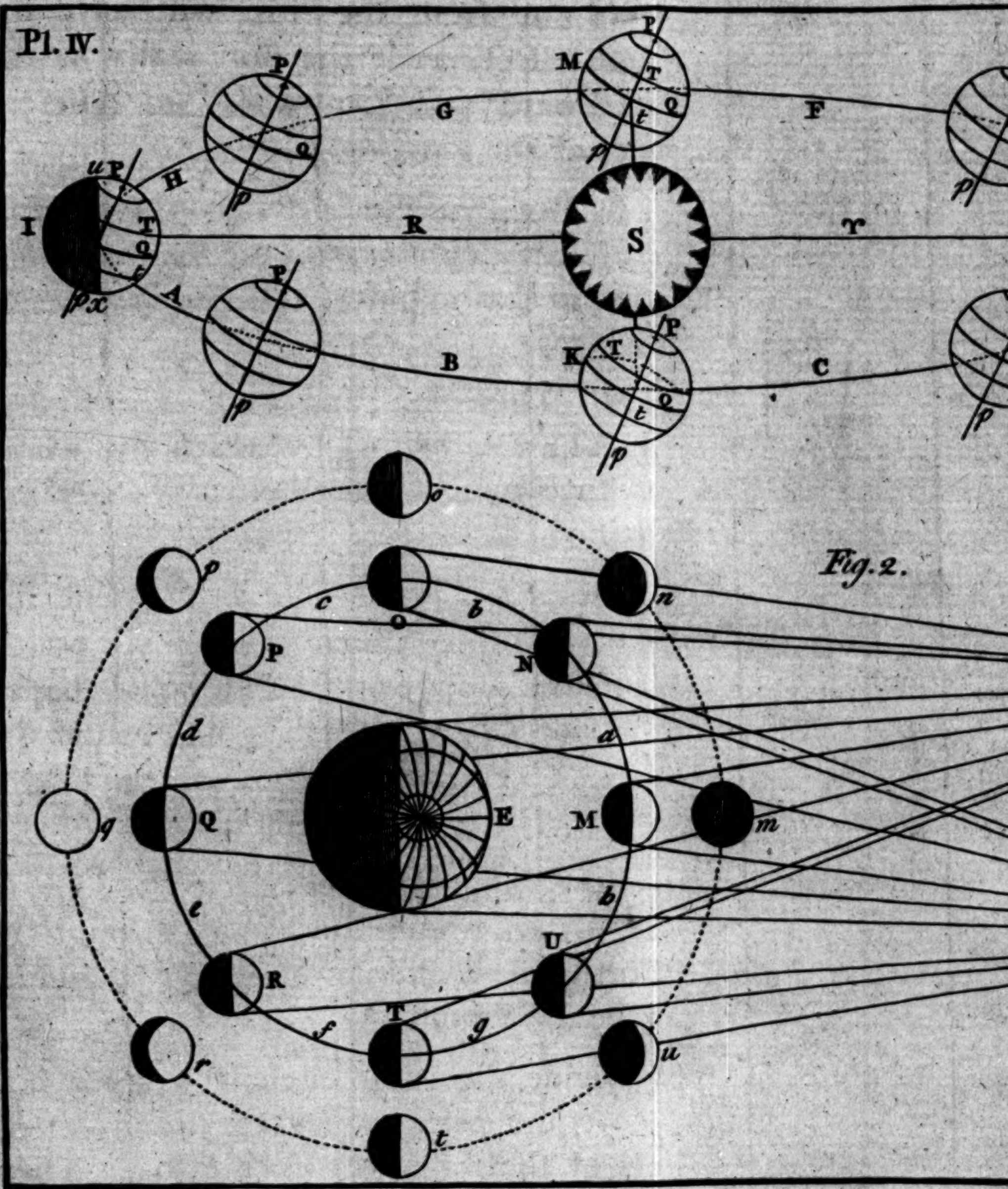


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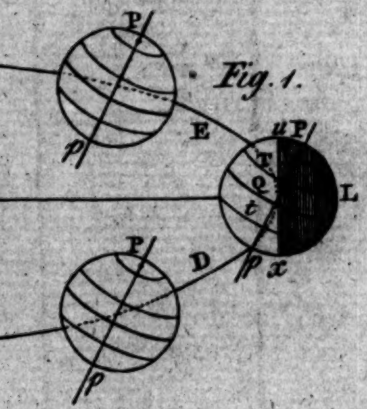
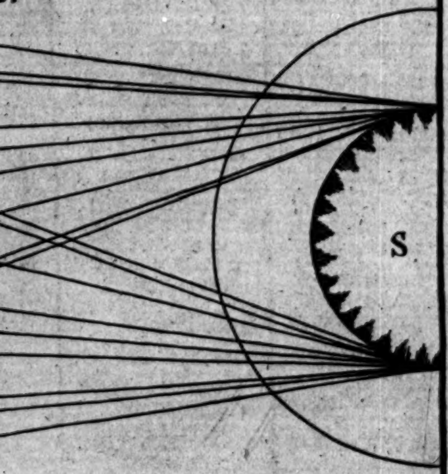
Fig. 1.



2.



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ward and from the Sun, will have the ſame effect, as if the Sun really moved northward and ſouthward, to different ſides of the Equator.

E. It will, indeed.—But do the poles of the Earth incline toward the Sun, and from him, in that manner, at different times of the year?

N. They do: and here is a figure, (PLATE IV. *Fig.* 1.) by which the whole of that matter may be very eaſily explained.

Let *A B C D E F G H A* repreſent the Earth's orbit (ſeen obliquely, which cauſeth it to appear of an elliptical ſhape). And let *I* be the Earth, going round the Sun *S*, according to the order of the letters, *A B C D*, &c. once every year.

Now, ſuppoſe a great circle *P u I p x*, to be drawn round the earth, through its North pole *P* and its South pole *p*; and let ♎ be the Equator.

Divide the great circle *P u I p x* into 360 equal parts or degrees; and ſet off $23\frac{1}{2}$ of theſe degrees from *P* to *u*. Then, at the diſtance *P u* from the North pole, draw a circle all around it; which call *the North polar circle:* and ſuppoſe juſt ſuch another circle to be drawn around the South pole.

Make the Earth's axis *P p* incline 23$\frac{1}{2}$ degrees toward the right hand ſide of the plate; and let the Earth *I* be carried round the Sun *S*, in the orbit *A B C D*, &c. in the time of its turning 365$\frac{1}{4}$ times round its axis: and, in its whole courſe, let its axis *P p* ſtill incline 23$\frac{1}{2}$ degrees toward the right hand ſide of the plate.

Then it is plain, that when the Earth is at *I*, the whole North polar circle falls within the enlightened part of the Earth; and all the northern places between the Equator *Q* and the North polar circle *u* are more in the light than in the dark: and therefore, as the Earth turns round its axis, theſe places will have longer days than they have nights: and the Sun will point as far North of the Equator *Q*, as ſhewn by the ſtraight line *R*, as he ſhines round the North pole *P*; for the diſtance *Q T*, northward from the

Equator, is equal to the diſtance *P u* from the North pole; which is 23½ degrees.——This is the Earth's poſition on the 21ſt of June, when our days are at the longeſt, and nights at the ſhorteſt.

At the diſtance *Q T* (23½ degrees northward from the Equator) deſcribe the circle *T*, round the globe, parallel to the Equator: and as the Sun is directly over the circle *T*, in the right line *R*, and can never be farther North of the Equator; but begins then to recede, as it were, ſouthward from the circle *T*, that circle is called *the Northern Tropic*, or limit of the Sun's greateſt North declination from the Equator *Q*.

As the Earth moves on in its orbit, from *I* to *K*, its axis *P p* inclines more and more ſidewiſe to the Sun *S*; as it ſtill keeps parallel to the poſition it had when the Earth was at *I*: for which reaſon, the northern places are gradually turned away from the Sun; and their days grow ſhorter, and their nights longer.

When the Earth is at *K*, its axis *P p* inclines neither toward the Sun nor from him, but is ſidewiſe to him: ſo that the Sun is then directly over the Equator, and enlightens the Earth juſt from pole to pole. And, as the Earth's rotation on its axis then carries all the parts of its ſurface between the poles equally through the light and the dark, the days and nights are equally long at all places of the Earth. This is the Earth's poſition on the 23d of September.

As the Earth advances from *K* to *L*, through the part *C D* of its orbit, the North pole *P* and all the northern places of the Earth are gradually more and more turned away from the Sun *S*: and thoſe places of the northern hemiſphere which go through the light and the dark, go through more of the dark than of the light; ſo that their days become gradually ſhorter, and their nights longer.

When the Earth comes to *L* in its orbit, its North pole *P* is as much turned away from the Sun *S*, as it was turned toward him when the Earth was at *I*: and therefore, when the Earth is at *L*, the whole North polar circle *u* is in the dark; and the Sun points $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees (as ſhewn by the right line *r*) to the South of the Equator *Q*; and is then over the circle *t*, which is parallel to the Equator, and is called *the ſouthern tropic*, becauſe it is the utmoſt limit of the Sun's South declination from the Equator. This is the Earth's poſition on the 21ſt of December, when all thoſe places in the northern hemiſphere, which go through the light and the dark, go through the leaſt portion of the light, and the greateſt of the dark, that they can do on any day of the year. And therefore, the days are then at the ſhorteſt, and nights at the longeſt, in the northern half of the Earth, all the way from the Equator *Q* to the North polar circle *u*; within which circle there is no day at all.

As the Earth advances from *L* to *M*, through the part *E F* of its orbit, its axis *P p* is gradually more and more turned ſidewiſe to the Sun; the northern places fall more and more into the light, and their days lengthen and nights ſhorten. And when the Earth comes to *M*, which is on the 20th of March, its axis neither inclines toward the Sun nor from him, but ſidewiſe to him. And then, the Sun is directly over the Equator *Q*, and enlightens the Earth from its North pole *P* to its South pole *p*: and as it turns round its axis, every place on its ſurface from pole to pole goes equally through the light and the dark; and has the day and night of an equal length, that is, twelve hours each.

Laſtly, as the Earth goes on from *M* to *I*, in the part *G H* of its orbit, its North pole *P*, and all its northern places from the Equator *Q* to that pole, advance gradually more and more into the light; and ſo, have their days longer and nights ſhorter, till the Earth comes to *I* on the 20th of June, when the days in thoſe places are at the longeſt, and nights at the ſhorteſt; becauſe they incline the moſt to the Sun that they can do on any day of the year; and conſequently, they then go through the greateſt portions of the light, and the leaſt of the dark, all the way from the Equator to the North polar circle *u*; within which circle there is then no darkneſs at all.

And thus, as the Earth's axis ſtill inclines toward one and the ſame ſide of the heavens, in its whole annual courſe round the Sun; as in the figure it does toward the right hand ſide of the plate; it is evident, that its axis muſt incline conſtantly, more or leſs, toward the Sun during our ſummer half of the year; and more or leſs from him during our winter half. That, when it is ſummer in the northern hemiſphere, it muſt be winter in the ſouthern, and the contrary: and that there can be no difference of ſeaſons at the Equator, becauſe it is in the middle between the poles, and always equally cut in halves by the boundary of light and darkneſs *u x*.

E. This very plainly ſhews the reaſon of the different lengths of days and nights, and alſo of all the variety of ſeaſons.——

But, as I apprehend the matter, each pole, in its turn, muſt be continually in the light for half a year together; and in the dark for the other half: ſo that it appears there can be but one day and one night at each pole, in the whole year.

N. You are quite right, *Eudoſia*; and have told me the very thing that I was about to inform you of.

E. I came into your room yeſterday about one o'clock; but you happened then to be out: and ſeeing a book lying open on your table, I looked into it; and found mention made of the *ecliptic*, the *ſigns* thereof, and the *Sun's place*. Pray, what is the ecliptic, and what are its ſigns?

N. If the plane of the Earth's orbit were produced out to the ſtars, like a broad circular thin plate, its edge would form a great circle among the ſtars; which great circle (though only an imaginary one) we call *the Ecliptic.* And as the Earth moves in the plane of ſuch a circle, in its whole courſe round the Sun, it will be always ſeen from the Sun as moving in ſuch a circle among the ſtars: and, at any given time, in the *oppoſite* point of that circle to the point of it in which the Sun then appears as ſeen from the Earth. So that, as the Earth goes round the Sun once a year, the Sun will appear to us to deſcribe a great circle among the ſtars, in a year.

Aſtronomers divide this circle into twelve equal parts, called *Signs*, and each ſign into 30 equal parts called *Degrees*. And in *whatever* Sign and Degree the Earth would appear, as ſeen from the Sun, at any given time; the Sun muſt then appear in the *oppoſite* Sign and Degree as ſeen from the Earth; and the part of the Ecliptic in which the Sun's center appears to be, as ſeen from the Earth at any given inſtant of time, is called *the Sun's place in the Ecliptic*, at that time.

Theſe *Signs* are called *Aries*, *Taurus*, *Gemini*, *Cancer*, *Leo*, *Virgo*, *Libra*, *Scorpio*, *Sagittarius*, *Capricornus*, *Aquarius*, and *Piſces*. The month and days of the year, in which the Sun appears to enter theſe Signs, are as follows:

Aries,	*Taurus,*	*Gemini,*	*Cancer,*	*Leo,*	*Virgo,*
March	April	May	June	July	Auguſt
20	20	21	21	23	23
Libra,	*Scorpio,*	*Sagittarius,*	*Capricornus,*	*Aquarius,*	*Piſces,*
Sept.	Octob.	Novemb.	Decemb.	Jan.	Feb.
23	23	22	21	20	19

E. Then, let me ſee; I think I could tell, by this, what the Sun's place in the Ecliptic is, on any day of the year. Each ſign has 30 degrees; this is the 11th day of July, and the Sun does not enter *Leo* till the 23d; ſo that he muſt yet be in Cancer. Take 11 from 23, and there remains 12; ſo that the Sun is now 12 degrees ſhort of the laſt point of *Cancer*; and conſequently, he is in the 18th degree thereof.

N. You are perfectly right, ſiſter: and I think we have done with this part of our ſubject.

E. And will you allow me, this morning, to enter upon any other?

N. Why not? and continue it too till the bell calls us to breakfaſt.

E. Which, I hope, will not be in leſs than half an hour: and till then, I ſhould be glad to learn ſomething about the Moon.

N. Very well: it is your province to aſk queſtions, and mine to anſwer them.

E. What is the cauſe of the Moon's appearing of ſuch different ſhapes as ſhe does to us every month, always increaſing from change to full, and decreaſing from full to change?

N. Be pleaſed to light the candle again, and ſet it on yonder table, at the farther end of the room, whilſt I cloſe the window-ſhutters. And then, do you ſtand at a good diſtance from the candle, and look toward it.

E. Very well, brother;—Now.

N. Here is a ſmall ivory globe, with a wire through it, by way of an axis. I will now move *that* globe round your head; and, as I carry it about, do you turn yourſelf round, and keep looking at it. Let the candle repreſent the Sun, your head the Earth, and the globe the Moon. As the candle can enlighten only that half of the globe which is turned toward it, ſo the Sun can only enlighten that half of the Moon which is at any time turned toward him. The other half is in the dark, and the Moon goes round the Earth in her orbit once a month.

As I carry the globe round your head, the dark ſide of it is toward you when it is between your head and the candle; the light ſide when it is carried half round, or oppoſite to the candle with reſpect to your head; and in the middle between theſe two poſitions, you have half the light and half the dark ſide toward you.

E. Very true.—And when the globe is between me and the candle, the whole of its enlightened ſide diſappears: when you move it a little way from that poſition, I ſee a little of its enlightened ſide, appearing horned, like the Moon when ſhe is a few days old. When you carry it a quarter round, I ſee half its enlightened ſide, which appears juſt like the Moon when ſhe is a quarter old. As you move it farther onward, I ſee more and more of its enlightened ſide;

and it continues to increaſe like the Moon, till it is juſt oppoſite to the candle, when I ſee the whole of its enlightened ſide; and then it appears quite round, like the full Moon. After which, I ſee leſs and leſs of its enlightened ſide, which gradually decreaſes like the Moon, until you bring it again between me and the candle; and then, the whole of its enlightened ſide diſappears, as before.

N. And doth not this ſhew very plainly, why the Moon muſt appear to us to increaſe from the change to the full; and decreaſe from the full to the change?

E. Very plainly, indeed: and, I think, it alſo ſhews that the Moon does not ſhine by any light of her own; but only by reflecting the Sun's light that falls upon her. For, if ſhe ſhone by her own light, we ſhould always ſee her round, like the Sun.

N. *That* is a very good and juſt obſervation, ſiſter; and it is a remark that

I might poſſibly have forgotten to make.

E. But, if you had not explained the different appearances of the Moon by means of a globe and a candle; how would you have done it by a figure?

N. Here is a figure for that purpoſe (PLATE IV. *Fig.* 2.), in which, let *S* repreſent the Sun, *E* the Earth, *M* the Moon; and *a b c d e f g h a* the Moon's orbit, in which ſhe goes round the Earth from change to change, according to the order of the letters; that is, eaſtward in the heavens; although the Earth's daily motion round its axis, the ſame way, being quicker than the Moon's progreſſive motion, makes her appear to go round weſtward. When the Moon is at *M*, between the Earth and the Sun, her dark ſide is then toward the Earth; and ſhe diſappears, becauſe *that* ſide reflects no light. When ſhe is at *N*, a little of her enlightened ſide will be ſeen from the Earth; and then ſhe will appear horned, as at *n*. When ſhe is at *O*, half her enlightened ſide will be toward the Earth, and ſhe will then appear as at *o*, or in her firſt quarter, being then got a quarter of her orbit out from between the Earth and the Sun. When ſhe is at *P*, more than half of her enlightened ſide is toward the Earth; and ſhe appears (what we call) Gibbous, as at *p*. When ſhe is oppoſite to the Sun, as at *Q*, the whole of her enlightened ſide is toward the Earth: and ſhe appears round and full, as at *q*.

E. Let me interrupt you a little here. Pray how can the Sun ſhine upon the Moon, when the Earth is directly between her and the Sun? For, I ſhould think, that the Earth would ſtop the Sun's light from going to the Moon.

N. It does ſometimes; and then the Moon is eclipſed: and ſometimes the Moon comes directly between the Earth and the Sun at the time of her change; and then we ſay, the Sun is eclipſed. But we ſhall talk of theſe matters afterward.

E. I am very glad of it; and now, Sir, pray proceed.

N. When the Moon is at *R* in her orbit, part of her enlightened ſide is turned away from the Earth; and ſhe appears gibbous again, as at *r*. When ſhe is at *T* (three quarters round her orbit from between the Earth and the Sun) half of her light and half of her dark ſide is toward the Earth; and ſhe appears half decreaſed, or in her third quarter, as at *t*. When ſhe is at *U* in her orbit, the greateſt part of her enlightened ſide is turned away from the Earth; and ſhe appears horned, as at *u*. And when ſhe is between the Earth and the Sun again, as at *M*, ſhe is quite inviſible; becauſe the whole of her unenlightened ſide is then toward the Earth.

E. This does very well; but I like the candle and ball ſtill better.

N. For this very good reaſon, that they are more like the works of nature than any figures we can draw on paper.

E. How long is the Moon in going round her orbit from change to change?

N. Twenty-nine days, twelve hours, forty-four minutes, three ſeconds.

E. And what is her diſtance from the Earth's center?

N. Two hundred and forty thouſand Engliſh miles.

E. How many times would it take round the Earth, to go round the Moon's orbit?

N. Sixty times: and therefore, every degree of the Moon's orbit is equal in length to 60 degrees of a great circle (or 4155 miles) on the Earth's ſurface.

E. What is the Moon's diameter; and in what proportion is it to the Earth's?

N. The Moon's diameter is 2183½ miles; and it is in proportion to the Earth's diameter as 100 is to 365, or as 20 to 73.

E. What are thoſe ſpots which we ſee on the Moon? I think I have heard ſome people ſay that they are ſeas.

N. So they were thought to be, before there were good teleſcopes to view the Moon by. But now they are found to be only darker places of the land in the Moon, which do not reflect the Sun's light ſo copiouſly as the whiter parts do. For we ſee they are full of pits and deep valleys: but if they were ſeas, they would have even and ſmooth ſurfaces.

E. So they certainly would, brother. But as it may be known by theſe ſpots whether the Moon turns round her own axis or not;—if ſhe does turn round, I ſhould be glad to know in what time; becauſe I ſhould thereby know the length of her days and nights.

N. She turns round her axis exactly in the time ſhe goes round her orbit; and this we know by her keeping always the ſame ſide toward the Earth.

E. Then ſhe can have only one day and one night between change and change, or in 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 3 ſeconds, of our time.

N. Exactly ſo.

E. And is her axis inclined to her orbit, as our Earth is to its orbit?

N. No: her axis is perpendicular to the ecliptic, in which the Earth moves; and nearly perpendicular to her own orbit.

E. Then her days and nights muſt always be equally long; and ſhe can have no different ſeaſons?

N. You are very right, *Eudoſia.*

E. But pray, brother, how is it poſſible that we can only ſee one and the ſame ſide of the Moon at all times, if ſhe turns round her axis?—For, I ſhould think, that if ſhe has ſuch a motion, we muſt ſee all her ſides.

N. Take up *that* little globe by its axis, between your fore-finger and thumb.

E. There it is.

N. Now, hold its axis, without turning (as you hold your pen when you write), and carry it round the ink-horn on the table.

E. I do.

N. And do you not ſee, that as you carry the globe ſo round, without turning it at all on its axis, all its ſides are ſucceſſively ſhewn to the ink-horn?

E. They are indeed.

N. Carry it round the ink-horn again; and try whether you can make it ſtill keep one and the ſame ſide toward the ink-horn, without turning round on its axis, by turning the axis round between your fore-finger and thumb.

E. I find it impoſſible to do ſo:—for in each revolution of the globe about the ink-horn, in order to make the globe keep ſtill the ſame ſide toward it, I am obliged to turn the axis once round betwixt my finger and thumb: and, as the axis is fixt in the globe, I cannot turn the axis round without turning the globe round too.

N. Well, ſiſter, ſeeing that the Moon goes round the Earth in her orbit, as you carry the globe round the ink-horn; is not her keeping the ſame ſide always toward the Earth a full proof of her turning round her axis?

E. It certainly is: and I can alſo ſee, that as the Sun is on the outſide of the Moon's orbit, her keeping always the ſame ſide toward the Earth, makes her ſhew herſelf all around to the Sun between change and change.—For, in the time that I carried the globe round the ink-horn, and kept always the ſame ſide toward it; you, who were on the out-ſide of the circle in which I carried the globe ſo round, ſaw all its ſides.

N. You are very right.——But I am ſorry to hear our breakfaſt-bell: for we have not yet done with the Moon.

DIALOGUE VII.

On the MOON'*s motion round the* EARTH *and* SUN; *and the* ECLIPSES *of the* SUN *and* MOON.

Neander.

SO, Siſter;—if yeſterday had not been Sunday, I believe you would not have given yourſelf *that* day's reſt from your aſtronomical ſtudies.

Eudoſia. To me, brother, theſe ſtudies are recreations, which I eſteem better than bare reſt.—And, on Sunday we reſt not; but are better employed in the duties of the day, than we generally are on all the other days of the week.

N. True; and therein our duty is cloſely connected with our intereſt.—— Shall we now reſume our ſubject about the Moon? as I told you, laſt Saturday morning, that we had not done with her.

E. If you pleaſe, Sir.

N. Then you muſt always ſtart the game; and when *that* is done, we will purſue it.

E. I think the Moon would always appear full as ſeen from the Sun, if ſhe were big enough to be ſeen by an obſerver placed on the Sun's ſurface.

N. She certainly would; becauſe, whichever ſide of her is turned toward the Sun at any time, *that* ſide would be fully enlightened by the Sun.

E. And I imagine, that if an obſerver were placed on the ſide of the Moon which always keeps toward the Earth, the Earth would appear to him in all the different ſhapes that the Moon does to us. Only, that when the Moon is *new* to us, the Earth would be *full* to the Moon; and when the Moon is *full* to us, the Earth would diſappear, or be *new* to the Moon.

N. What reaſon have you for thinking ſo, *Eudoſia*?

E. Becauſe, whichever ſide of the Earth or Moon is turned toward the Sun at any time, *that* ſide is then enlightened by the Sun. And therefore, when the dark ſide of the Moon *M* (*Fig.* 2. of PLATE IV.) is toward the Earth *E*, the enlightened ſide of the Earth is then fully toward the Moon; and muſt appear to her like a great full Moon. And when the enlightened ſide of the Moon at *Q* is fully toward the Earth, the dark ſide of the Earth is toward the Moon; and therefore it cannot appear to the Moon, as the Moon at *M* does not appear to us. And farther, when the Moon appears half full to us (or in her firſt quarter) at *O*, the Earth muſt appear half decreaſed to the Moon, being then half way between its full and change, as ſeen from her. And laſtly, when the Moon is in her third quarter at *T*, as ſeen from the Earth, the Earth muſt appear as in its firſt quarter to the Moon; it being then the middle time between the new and full Earth, as ſeen from the Moon.

N. You are exactly right, ſiſter: and as the ſurface of the Earth is 13 times as large as the ſurface of the Moon, when the Earth is full to the Moon, its ſurface appears 13 times as big to the Moon, as the ſurface of the full Moon does to us.

E. If the Moon be inhabited on the ſide which always keeps toward the Earth, I think theſe inhabitants may as eaſily find their Longitude as we can find our Latitude.

N. Tell me how: and if you can make that out, I ſhall ſay you *think* very well.

E. When you explained the Longitude to me, you made me underſtand, that if there were a viſible meridian in the Heaven, keeping always over one and the ſame meridian on the Earth (which it would do if it revolved eaſtward in 24 hours as the Earth does), the Longitude of the Earth would diſappear, or be *new* to the Moon.

N. What reaſon have you for thinking ſo, *Eudoſia?*

E. Becauſe, whichever ſide of the Earth or Moon is turned toward the Sun at any time, *that* ſide is then enlightened by the Sun. And therefore, when the dark ſide of the Moon *M* (*Fig.* 2. of PLATE IV.) is toward the Earth *E*, the enlightened ſide of the Earth is then fully toward the Moon; and muſt appear to her like a great full Moon. And when the enlightened ſide of the Moon at *Q* is fully toward the Earth, the dark ſide of the Earth is toward the Moon; and therefore it cannot appear to the Moon, as the Moon at *M* does not appear to us. And farther, when the Moon appears half full to us (or in her firſt quarter) at *O*, the Earth muſt appear half decreaſed to the Moon, being then half way between its full and change, as ſeen from her. And laſtly, when the Moon is in her third quarter at *T*, as ſeen from the Earth, the Earth muſt appear as in its firſt quarter to the Moon; it being then the middle time between the new and full Earth, as ſeen from the Moon.

N. You are exactly right, ſiſter: and as the ſurface of the Earth is 13 times as large as the ſurface of the Moon, when the Earth is full to the Moon, its ſurface appears 13 times as big to the Moon, as the ſurface of the full Moon does to us.

E. If the Moon be inhabited on the ſide which always keeps toward the Earth, I think theſe inhabitants may as eaſily find their Longitude as we can find our Latitude.

N. Tell me how: and if you can make that out, I ſhall ſay you *think* very well.

E. When you explained the Longitude to me, you made me underſtand, that if there were a viſible meridian in the Heaven, keeping always over one and the ſame meridian on the Earth (which it would do if it revolved eaſtward in 24 hours as the Earth does), the Longitude of any other meridian of the Earth from *that* meridian, might as eaſily be found as the elevation of the pole above the horizon is found.—Now, ſeeing that the Moon keeps always one and the ſame ſide toward the Earth, it is plain, that the Earth will be always over an obſerver's head who is on that part of the Moon's ſurface which ſeems to us to be her center. And therefore if Longitude on the Moon were reckoned from the meridian of that obſerver, thoſe on all her other meridians on the ſame ſide, might find how many degrees lie between their meridian and that which is under the Earth, by obſerving how many degrees the Earth is Eaſt or Weſt of their meridian. But, as thoſe inhabitants who live on what we call the *back* of the Moon, never ſee the Earth; they are deprived of *that* eaſy method of finding their Longitude.

N. Truly, ſiſter, I ought to make you a very *fine ſpeech* for that thought: but having no talent that way, all I ſhall ſay,

ſay is, that I am very well pleaſed by it.

E. I am very glad to hear you ſay ſo, becauſe you thereby aſſure me that I am right.—But now a difficulty occurs to my mind, which I beg you will remove.

N. Only tell it me, and I will remove it if I can.

E. The Moon goes round the Earth every month; and as the Earth goes round the Sun in a year, the Moon muſt do ſo too.—How happens it, that the Earth, by moving at the rate of 68,000 miles every hour, in its orbit, does not go off, and leave the Moon behind?

N. The Moon is within the ſphere of the Earth's attraction: and therefore, let the Earth move in its orbit as faſt as it will, the Moon muſt accompany it. For you know, that if you put a pebble into a ſling, and whirl it round your head, the pebble will go round and round your head, whether you ſtand ſtill in one and the ſame place, or whether you walk directly forward, or go round the circumference of a large circle. And the tendency of the pebble to fly off, and the force with which you hold the ſtring to confine the pebble in its orbit, will be the ſame in one caſe as in the other.

E. I thank you, brother, for having ſet me right in this matter; and at the ſame time for convincing me, by the ſimile, that the Moon's centrifugal force, or tendency to fly out of her orbit, is equal to the power by which the Earth attracts her, and thereby retains her in her orbit: for, if her centrifugal force were greater than the Earth's attraction, ſhe would fly out of her orbit, and ſo abandon the Earth. And if her centrifugal force were leſs than the power by which the Earth attracts her, ſhe would come nearer and nearer the Earth in every revolution, and would fall upon it at laſt.

N. I find, dear *Eudoſia*, that you very ſeldom need to be ſet right: and when I do, you

Pl. V.

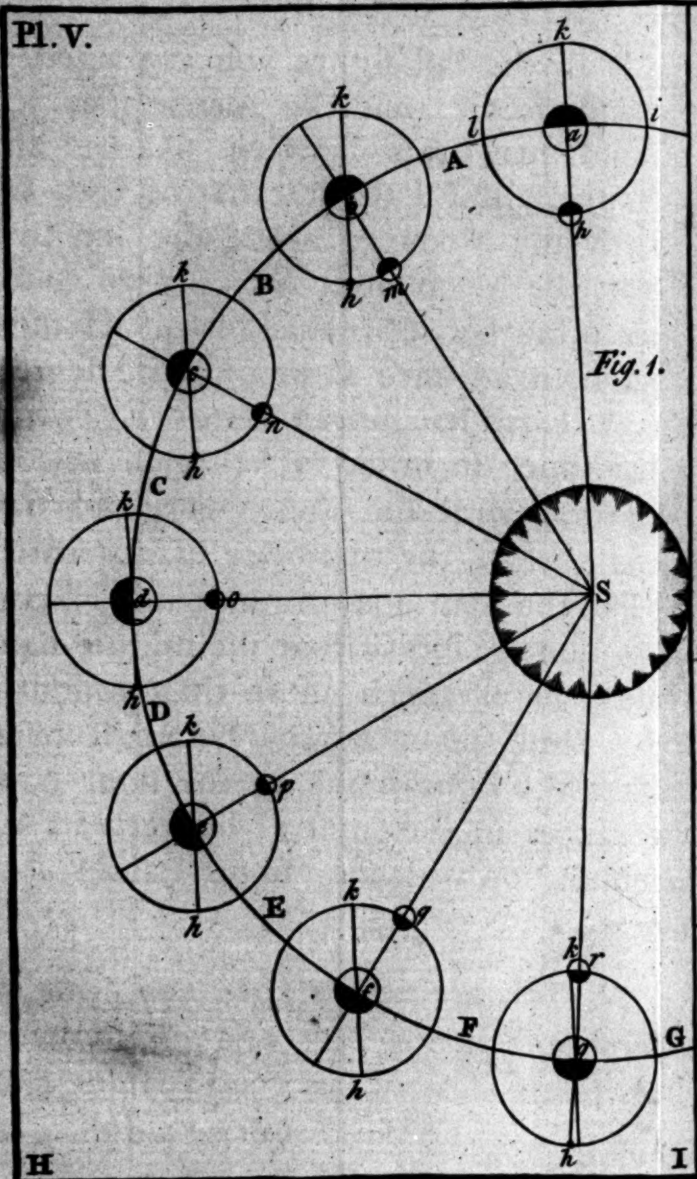
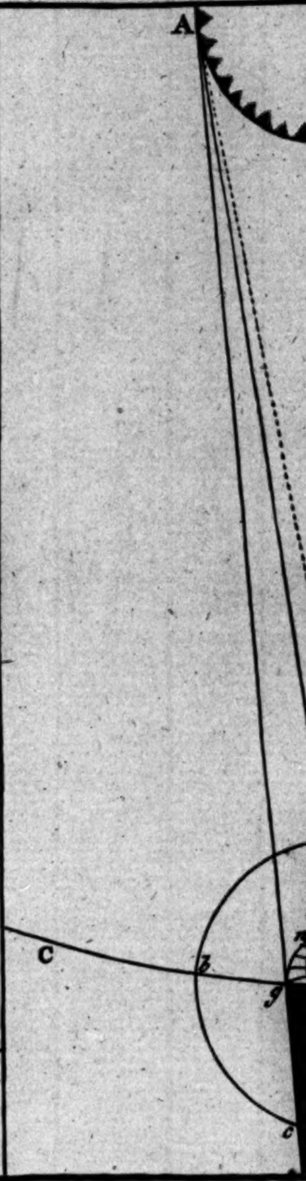


Fig. 1.



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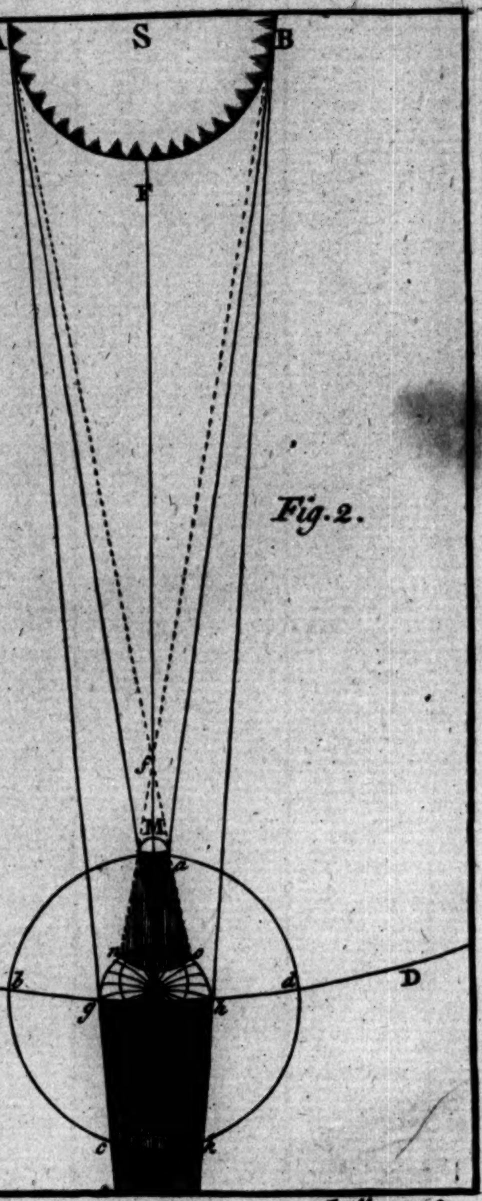


Fig. 2.

J. Mynde sc.

you always improve upon it, by making farther obſervations.

E. By the laſt figure you explained, it would ſeem, that the Moon goes juſt round her orbit between change and change. But I think, that as both the Earth and Moon go round the Sun in a year, the Moon muſt not only go round her orbit between change and change, but even advance as many more degrees as the Earth has moved in its orbit during that time, in order to be again in conjunction with the Sun. For, in whatever part of the dial-plate of my watch, I find the hour and minute-hands in conjunction, I obſerve that the minute-hand muſt go as much more than round to the ſame point again, before it overtakes the hour-hand, as the hour-hand advances in the interval between its laſt conjunction with the minute-hand and its next.

N. You are very right; and your inference from the hour and minute hands of the watch is full as good as mine from the pebble and ſling. I drew a figure, laſt

Saturday afternoon, in order to explain this matter to you by it. But, as you underſtand the thing ſo well already, we have no occaſion for the figure.

E. Nay, brother,—I beg you will ſhow me the figure, and explain it too, if your time will permit.

N. Then, here it is: (PLATE V. *Fig.* 1.) Let *ABCDEFG* be one half of the Earth's orbit; which will do as well for us, juſt now, as if the whole of it had been drawn. Let *S* be the Sun, *a* the Earth, *b* the Moon when new, or between the Earth and the Sun; and *i k l* the Moon's orbit, in which ſhe goes round the Earth according to the order of the letters *b i k l:* and let the Earth, together with the Moon and her (imaginary) orbit, go round the Sun in a year.

Draw a diameter *k b* of the Moon's orbit, when the Earth is at *a*; ſo as, if that line were continued, it would go on ſtraight to the Sun's center *S:* it is plain, that when the Moon is in the end *b* of *that* line, ſhe muſt be *new*, or between the Earth and the Sun.

As the Earth moves on, from *a* to *b*, from *b* to *c*, from *c* to *d*, from *d* to *e*, &c. the ſaid diameter *k h*, *k h*, *k h*, *k h*, will ſtill continue parallel to the poſition *k h*, that it had when the Earth was at *a*: that is, it will always keep perpendicular to the bottom line *H I* of the plate. And therefore, if it pointed *once* toward a fixed ſtar, whoſe diſtance from the Sun is ſo great, that the whole diameter of the Earth's orbit bears no ſenſible proportion to that diſtance (which is really the caſe), the point *h* would *always* keep between the Earth and the ſame ſtar.

E. I underſtand you very well: but, do you ſay *the ſtars are fixed?*

N. I do ſay ſo; and will convince you afterward that *they are.*

E. I beg pardon for interrupting you ſo often.—Pray, now proceed.

N. In the time the Moon goes round from *h* to *h* again, in the direction *h i k l h*, ſhe goes quite round her orbit; which ſhe would always do between change and change, if the Earth always remained at *a*.

But as the Earth advances as far in its orbit as from *a* to *b*, between any change of the Moon and the next that ſucceeds it; it is plain, that when the Earth is at *b*, and the Moon new at *m*, ſhe will have gone more than round her orbit from *b* to *b* again, by the ſpace *b m*. And as all circles, be they ever ſo great or ever ſo ſmall, contain 360 degrees (a degree being not limited by any certain number of miles, but the length of the 360th part of a circle) the ſpace *b m*, by which the Moon has gone more than round her orbit, from her change at *b* to her change at *m*, will contain juſt as many degrees and parts of a degree, as the Earth has moved in that time, from *a* to *b* in its orbit.

At the ſecond change of the Moon from *b*, the Earth will be at *c*, and the Moon at *n*: by which time ſhe will have gone twice round her orbit from *b* to *b* again, and as much more as the ſpace or part *b n* of her orbit contains, which conſiſts of as many degrees as the part *a b c* of the Earth's orbit does.—And ſo on, through the whole figure.

E. I ſee all this very plainly; and that the figure includes ſix changes of the Moon, as from *b* to *m*, from *m* to *n*, from *n* to *o*, from *o* to *p*, from *p* to *q*, and from *q* to *r*.—But, at the laſt of theſe changes, it ſeems (by the figure) that the Earth has not gone half way round the Sun: for the laſt line of conjunction *S r g* is not quite even with the firſt line of conjunction *a b S*.

N. Nor ſhould it be; for if it be rightly drawn (and I find I muſt take care how I draw figures for you), it muſt want 5⅓ degrees of the Earth's progreſſive motion in half a year. For ſix courſes of the Moon, from change to change, contain only 177 days, 4 hours, 24 minutes, 18 ſeconds, which wants 5 days, 7 hours, 35 minutes, 42 ſeconds, of 182 days, 12 hours, which is the half of a common year. And, in that difference of time, the Earth moves ſomewhat more than five degrees in its orbit.

E. I remember you told me that the time from change to change is 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 3 ſeconds: pray in what time does the Moon go round her orbit?

N. In 27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes, 5 ſeconds.

E. And how far doth the Earth move in its orbit between change and change of the Moon?

N. Twenty-nine degrees, ſix minutes, twenty-five ſeconds.—And here you are to underſtand that a minute is the 60th part of a degree, and a ſecond is the 60th part of a minute.

E. Then, it is plain, that between change and change, the Moon goes 29 degrees, 6 minutes, 25 ſeconds, more than round her orbit.

N. True, *Eudoſia*; and now I have only to tell you farther, on this ſubject, that the Moon's *going round her orbit* is called *her periodical revolution*; and that her *going round from change to change* is called her *ſynodical revolution.*

E. I thank you, Sir, for having told me ſo much.——But are you not tired at preſent with hearing and anſwering my queſtions?

N. Very far from it.—I love theſe ſubjects; and my talking with *you* about them will keep *me* from forgetting them.

E. Then, I ſhould be exceeding glad to know ſomething about eclipſes.

N. You ſhall know *that* very ſoon.——In *Fig.* 2. of PLATE V. let *S* be the Sun, *M* the Moon, and *E* the Earth; *a b c d* the Moon's orbit, in which ſhe moves according to the order of the letters; and *C b d D* a part of the Earth's orbit, wherein it moves in the direction *C D.*—The Moon is new when ſhe is at *M*, and full when ſhe is at *m.*

Draw the ſtraight line *A e E* from the eaſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the eaſtern edge of the Moon, to the Earth *E*: then draw the ſtraight line *B e E* from the weſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the weſtern edge of the Moon, to the Earth.

Let theſe lines be ſuppoſed to turn round the middle line *F M E*; and the ſpace *e e*, within them, between the Moon and the Earth, will include the Moon's dark ſhadow, which is of a conical figure (like an inverted ſugar-loaf), and covers only a ſmall part of the Earth's ſurface at *E*: and only from that ſmall part, the Sun will be quite hid by the Moon, and appear to be totally eclipſed; and it can be quite dark *only* at that part, becauſe the Moon ſtops not the whole of the Sun's light at that inſtant of time, from any other part of the Earth.—It is evident, that if the Moon were nearer the Earth, her dark ſhadow would cover a larger part of its ſurface; and if ſhe were farther from the Earth, her ſhadow would end in a point ſhort of the Earth's ſurface; and then ſhe could not hide the whole body of the Sun from any part of the Earth; and thoſe who were juſt under the point of the dark ſhadow, would ſee the edge of the Sun, like a fine luminous ring, all around the dark body of the Moon.

But, although the Moon can hide the whole body of the Sun, only from a ſmall part of the Earth, at any time, when the Sun appears to be thus eclipſed by the Moon; yet, in all ſuch eclipſes, the Moon hides more or leſs of the Sun from a very large portion of the Earth's ſurface. For,

Draw the ſtraight line *A f o* from the eaſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the weſtern edge of the Moon, to the Earth at *o*.—Then draw the ſtraight line *B f n* from the weſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the eaſtern edge of the Moon, to the Earth at *n*. Let theſe lines (*A f o* and *B f n*) be ſuppoſed to turn round the middle line *F M E*, and their ends (*n* and *o*) will deſcribe a large circle on the Earth's ſurface, around *E*; within the whole of which circle, the Sun will appear to be more or leſs eclipſed by the Moon at *M*, as the places within that circle are more or leſs diſtant from its center *E*, where the dark ſhadow falls. For, when the Moon is at *M*, an obſerver on the Earth at *n*, will ſee the eaſtern edge of the Moon, juſt, as it were, touching the weſtern edge of the Sun at *B*; and an obſerver at *o* will ſee the weſtern edge of the Moon, juſt, as it were, touching the eaſtern edge of the Sun: but to all the places between *n* and *o*, the Moon will hide a part, or the whole of the Sun, according as they lie between *n* and *E*, or between *o* and *E*, or directly at *E*.—This faint ſhadow, all around the dark one, from *n* to *o*, on the Earth's ſurface, is called the *Penumbra*, or partial ſhadow of the Moon.

E. How many miles are contained in the diameter of the circle which the Penumbra fills, on the Earth's ſurface?

N. About 4700, when its center falls directly in a right line from the Sun's center to the Earth's, at a mean rate.—But when the Penumbra falls obliquely on the Earth's ſurface, its figure thereon will be elliptical; and then, the ſpace that it covers will be much larger; eſpecially if the Moon be then at her leaſt diſtance from the Earth.

E. What! brother: is not the Moon's diſtance from the Earth always the ſame?

N. By no means: for the Moon's orbit is of an elliptical (or oval) figure; and every ellipſis has two centers, which are between the middle and the ends of its longeſt diameter: and the Earth's center is in one of the centers (or, *as they are called*, focuſes) of the Moon's elliptical orbit.—So that, when I formerly told you, that the Moon's diſtance from the Earth's center is 240,000 miles, I only meant her *mean* (or middle) *diſtance* between her greateſt and leaſt diſtances.

E. Then I underſtand, that the Moon's diſtance from the Earth muſt be continually changing.——But ſuppoſing the Sun to be eclipſed when the Moon is at her leaſt diſtance from the Earth; what is the diameter of the ſpot upon the Earth's ſurface that would be quite covered by the Moon's dark ſhadow; from all parts of which ſpot, the Sun would be totally hid by the Moon?

N. About 180 miles.

E. As the Moon's diſtance from the Earth is little more than a 396th part of the Sun's diſtance from it (as I have computed), I ſuppoſe the Moon's ſhadow at the Earth will move almoſt as faſt as the Moon moves in her orbit.—Pray, in what time will the dark part of the ſhadow move over about 180 miles of the Earth's ſurface?

N. In four minutes and an half: and would go over *that* ſpace ſooner, if the Earth's motion round its axis (which is eaſtward, and conſequently the ſame way that the Moon's ſhadow goes over the Earth), did not keep the place on which the ſhadow falls, longer in the ſhadow than it would be, if the Earth had no ſuch motion.

E. Then an eclipſe of the Sun can never continue total, above four minutes and an half, at any place of the Earth?

N. It never can, even when it falls on the Equator, where the parts of the Earth's ſurface move the quickeſt of all. And when it falls upon any part of Britain, whoſe motion is ſlower, becauſe it is nearer the motionleſs pole, it would be ſooner over.

E. How then could the Sun be darkened ſo long as three hours, at the time of our SAVIOUR's crucifixion, as it is mentioned to be in the Goſpels?

N. There is no way of accounting for *that* darkneſs upon aſtronomical principles: for it was entirely out of the common courſe of nature.

E. How do you prove that it was out of the common courſe of nature?

N. Becauſe our Saviour was crucified on a full Moon day; and then, the Moon being oppoſite to the Sun, could not poſſibly hide the Sun from any part of the Earth.

E. I ſhould be very glad to know how you can prove, that the crucifixion was on a full Moon day.

N. Becauſe it was the time of the Paſſover; and the Paſſover was always kept at the time of full Moon.

E. You have made this very clear.—— And now, if you pleaſe, I ſhould be glad to have the cauſe of the Moon's eclipſes explained.

N. In the ſame figure, draw the ſtraight line *A g c* from the eaſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the eaſtern edge of the Earth at *g*; and the ſtraight line *B h k* from the weſtern edge of the Sun, cloſe by the weſtern edge of the Earth at *k*.——Let theſe two lines be ſuppoſed to turn round the middle line *F M m*; and they will include the ſpace between the part which is filled by the Earth's ſhadow *g c k h*.——It is plain, that, when the Moon is at *m* in her orbit, ſhe is totally covered by the Earth's ſhadow, and eclipſed by it; as it muſt then fall upon her, becauſe the Earth is between her and the Sun.

E. But how is it, that the Moon is at all viſible, when the Earth muſt entirely ſtop the Sun's light from falling upon her, and ſhe has no light of her own? For, the ſame ſide of the Moon that is toward the Earth at her change, is alſo toward the Earth at her full.—And, as we cannot ſee her at the change, I ſhould think we could not ſee her when ſhe is totally eclipſed; becauſe *that* ſide of her which is dark in the former caſe, when the Sun cannot ſhine upon it, ſhould be as dark in the latter, when the Earth intercepts the Sun's rays from it.—But the Moon was very viſible in her laſt total eclipſe; for I ſaw her, and ſhe appeared of a colour ſomewhat like that of tarniſhed copper.

N. You are very ſhrewd in your remarks, ſiſter;—and I will tell you why the Moon is not inviſible when ſhe is totally eclipſed.

The air, or atmoſphere, which ſurrounds the Earth, to the height of about 47 miles, is the cauſe of this. For, all the rays of the Sun's light which paſs through the atmoſphere, all around the Earth, in the boundary *(g h)* of light and darkneſs, are, by the atmoſphere, bent inward, toward the middle of the Earth's ſhadow: and thoſe rays, ſo mixed with the ſhadow, fall upon the Moon, and do enlighten her in ſome ſmall degree. She reflects the rays back to the Earth which fall upon her, and ſo ſhe is viſible *only* on that account. For, if the Earth had no atmoſphere, its ſhadow would be quite dark; and the Moon would be as inviſible, when ſhe is totally immerſed therein, as ſhe is at the time of her change.

E. I thank you, brother, for all theſe informations; but I ſtill want more.

N. Only ſay what they are; and I will inform you, if I can.

E. I ſee plainly by the figure, that the Sun can never be eclipſed (in a natural way) but at the time of new Moon; becauſe the Moon's ſhadow cannot fall upon the Earth at any other time; and that the Moon can never be eclipſed but when ſhe is full; becauſe that is the only time when the Earth's ſhadow can fall upon her. But though we have a new and a full Moon in every month of the year, I find my almanack mentions but very few eclipſes; and generally, about half a year between the times of their happening.

N. If the Moon's orbit *a b c k d a* lay exactly even (or in the ſame plane) with the Earth's orbit *C b d D*, as it is drawn on the flat paper, the Sun would be eclipſed at the time of every new Moon, and the Moon at the time of every full. But one half of the Moon's orbit lies on the North ſide of the plane of the Earth's orbit, and the other half on the South ſide of it: and conſequently, the Moon's orbit only croſſes the Earth's orbit in two oppoſite points.——When either of theſe points are between the Earth and the Sun, or nearly ſo, at the time of new or full Moon, the Sun or Moon will be eclipſed accordingly. But, at all other new Moons, the Moon either paſſeth above or below the Sun, as ſeen from the Earth: and, at all other full Moons, the Moon either paſſeth above or below the Earth's ſhadow. One of theſe points is called *the Aſcending Node* of the Moon's orbit; becauſe, when the Moon has paſt by it, ſhe aſcends northward, or to us, above the plane of the Earth's orbit: and the oppoſite point is called *the Deſcending Node* of the Moon's orbit; becauſe, as ſoon as ſhe has paſt by it, ſhe deſcends ſouthward; which, to us in the northern parts of the Earth, is below the plane of the Earth's orbit.

E. Suppoſing that either of theſe nodes were between the Earth and the Sun juſt now, how much time would elapſe before the other could be ſo?

N. It would be juſt half a year, if a line drawn from the one to the other kept always parallel to its preſent poſition (like the above-mentioned diameter of the Moon's orbit, *kh*, in *Fig.* 1.): but the nodes move backward, or toward the Weſt, contrary to the Moon's motion eaſtward in her orbit, at the rate of $19\frac{1}{3}$ degrees every year.—So that, from the time of the Sun's being in conjunction with either of the Moon's nodes, to the time of his being in conjunction with the other, is only 173 days, 7 hours, 3 minutes.

E. As there muſt be *ſome* diſtances from theſe nodes, within which the Sun and Moon muſt be eclipſed; I ſhould be glad to know what theſe diſtances are?

N. They are only 17 degrees for the Sun, and 12 for the Moon.

E. Now, let me ſee.——The Moon's whole orbit contains 360 degrees; of which there are only 17 on each ſide of each node, within which the Sun may be eclipſed. Twice 17 is 34, about one node, and there are as many about the other: in all, 68 degrees out of 360, for eclipſes of the Sun. And, as there are 12 degrees on each ſide of each node, within which the Moon can be eclipſed, there muſt be no more than 48 degrees in all out of the whole 360, for the eclipſes of the Moon. Am I right, brother? If I am, it is no wonder that we ſhould have ſo many new and full Moons, and ſo few eclipſes.

N. You are quite right, *Eudoſia*; and I am very glad to find that you make ſuch a quick progreſs.

E. I know that the times of eclipſes may be calculated before-hand, becauſe I ſee they are always predicted in the almanacks. Can you calculate them?

N. Yes.

E. I wiſh you would teach me to do ſo too, if you think I have a ſufficient capacity for that branch of ſcience.

N. You have much more; and I will inſtruct you with pleaſure; for you have not only learnt the four common rules of arithmetic, but even as far as the Rule of Three.—And, in theſe calculations, no farther arithmetic is neceſſary than *addition* and *ſubtraction*. But you muſt learn firſt to calculate the times of new and full Moons.

E. That I will do, with very great pleaſure.

N. Then we will ſet about it to-morrow morning, if you pleaſe: but the whole will take up a week at leaſt: during which time we muſt ſuſpend our uſual confabulations.

E. I wiſh *to-morrow* were come already.

N. You remember the book which you ſaw, a few days ago, in this room; in which you told me you had taken notice of ſomething concerning the Ecliptic and its ſigns.—Did you look at the title-page of that book?

E. I remember the book very well; but did not look at the title-page.

N. It is *Ferguſon*'s Aſtronomy. I ſent for it to Mr. *Cadell*'s ſhop in the Strand, oppoſite Catharine-ſtreet, on purpoſe to make you a preſent of it. There it is; and I am ſure you are qualified to read and underſtand it.

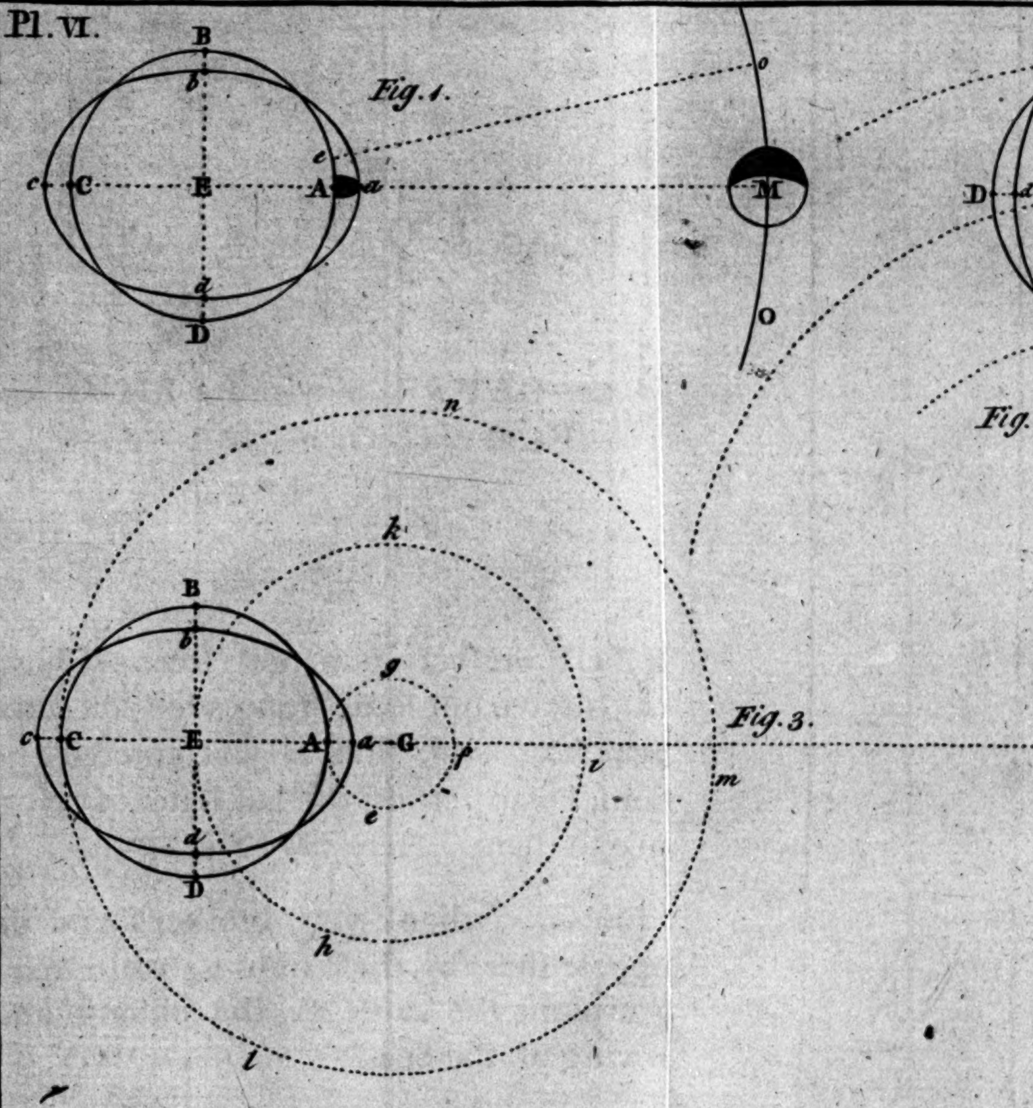
E. I heartily thank you, dear *Neander*, for this preſent.

N. There are in it plain and eaſy tables and precepts for calculating the true times of new and full Moons and eclipſes. And, if you have any ſpare time to-day, I wiſh you would begin, by yourſelf, to read the precepts, and compare them with the tables, and with the examples of calculation. And then, if you find any thing difficult, mark it, and I will help you out to-morrow morning. Mean time, if there be any thing elſe, which you would have us to talk about, before we are called to breakfaſt (which is later than uſual to-day), tell me what it is.

E. I wiſh I underſtood the cauſe of the ebbing and flowing of the Sea. But now the bell begins to ring for us.

N. Very well.—Be here in about an hour after breakfaſt.

Pl. VI.



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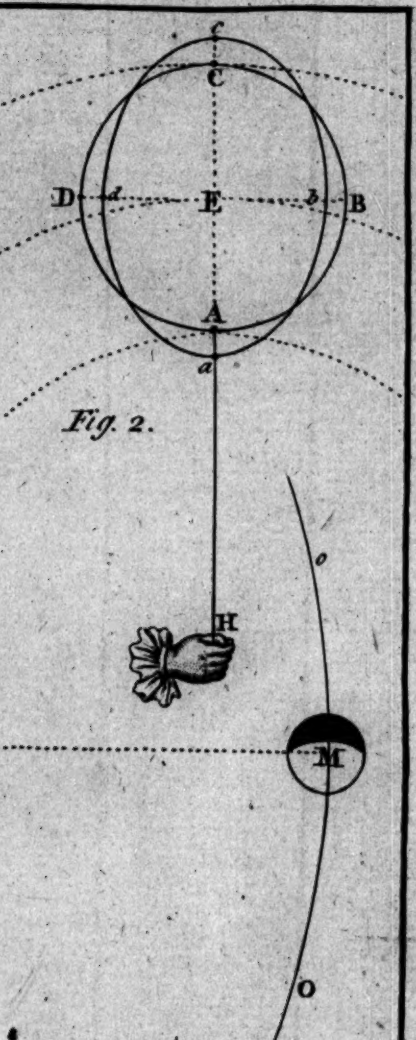


Fig. 2.

J. Mynde sc.

DIALOGUE VIII.

On the CAUSE *of the* EBBING *and* FLOWING *of the* SEA.

Neander.

YOU are very punctual, ſiſter.—I have drawn out ſome figures for you ſince breakfaſt; and, juſt as you entered the room, I was putting the laſt letter of reference to them. Here they are.

Eudoſia. I thank you, brother; and do ſuppoſe that, by theſe figures, you intend to explain the cauſe of the ebbing and flowing of the Sea.

N. I do. In *Fig.* 1. of PLATE VI. let *A B C D A* be the Earth, all covered with water, except the top of an iſland *A a.*

Let the Earth be in conſtant motion, turning eaſtward round its center *E*, every 24 hours, according to the order of the letters *A B C D*; and let *M* be the Moon, moving eaſtward in her orbit *O o*, as from *M* to *o* in 24 hours, 50 minutes. You know that the Earth and Moon are within the reach of each other's attraction; and therefore, as the Earth attracts the Moon, ſo the Moon re-attracts the Earth.

E. Yes, Sir.

N. Do you remember my telling you, ſome days ago, that the attraction diminiſhes, as the ſquare of the diſtance from the attracting body increaſes?

E. I remember it very well.

N. Then you know, that the Moon muſt attract the ſide *A* of the Earth which is neareſt to her (at any time) with a greater degree of force than ſhe attracts the Earth's center *E*; and that ſhe attracts the center *E* with a greater degree of force than ſhe attracts the ſide *C* of the Earth, which is then fartheſt from her.

E. Certainly.

N. And that the Earth and Moon would fall towards one another, by the power of their mutual attractions, if there was nothing to hinder them: and that the Moon would fall as much faſter toward the Earth than the Earth would fall toward the Moon, as the quantity of matter in the Earth is greater than the quantity of matter in the Moon.

E. Undoubtedly ſo; becauſe every particle of matter attracts with an equal degree of force; and therefore, the body which has the greater quantity of matter muſt attract the other with ſo much the greater degree of force.

N. Well done, *Eudoſia.* Let us now ſuppoſe the Earth and Moon falling toward each other. The earthy parts of our globe being connected, and cohering together, would not yield to any difference of the Moon's attractive force; but would all move equally faſt toward the Moon: as if a cord were tied to each end of a great folio book on the table, and you ſhould pull one cord with the force of four pounds, and I pull the other cord the ſame way with the force of eight pounds, ſo as to move the book; all the parts of it will move equally faſt, notwithſtanding the different forces by which you and I pull it. But the waters are of a yielding nature; the coherence of their particles being very ſmall: and therefore, they will be differently affected, according to the different degrees of the Moon's attractive force, at different diſtances from her.

And therefore, as the waters at *A* are more attracted by the Moon than the Earth is at its center *E*, they move faſter toward the Moon than the Earth's center does; and conſequently, with reſpect to the Earth's center, they riſe higher toward the Moon, as from *A* to *a*: and as the center *E* moves faſter toward the Moon than the waters on its ſurface at *C* do; the waters at *C* will be, as it were, left behind: and conſequently, with reſpect to the center *E*, they will be raiſed, as from *C* to *c*.

E. So far, I underſtand you perfectly well.

N. But as there is ſtill the ſame quantity of water on the whole Earth, the waters cannot riſe at one place without falling at another.—And therefore, the waters muſt fall as low at *b* and *d* as they riſe, at the ſame time, at *a* and *c*: ſo that an obſerver placed over *E*, at a diſtance from the Earth, would ſee the ſurface of the waters not of the round ſhape *A B C D*, as they would be if the Moon did not diſturb them by her attraction, but of the elliptical ſhape *a b c d*.

Then, as the Earth turns eaſtward round its axis, it is plain, that when the iſland *A a* is at *A*, it will be in the *high water*, under the Moon *M*: when it is at *B*, it will be in the *low water*, ſix hours from under the Moon: when it is at *C*, it will be in the *high water* again, twelve hours from under the Moon: and when it is at *D*, eighteen hours from being laſt under the Moon, it will be in the *low water* again. So that, if the Moon had no progreſſive motion in her orbit *O o*, but kept always in the ſame right line *A M*, the iſland *A a* would have two ebbings and two flowings of the Sea every 24 hours.

E. It would. But I find the tides are put down, in my almanack, later every day than on the day before. And now, I apprehend the reaſon of this to be, that as the Moon goes eaſtward round her orbit in a month, and the Earth turns eaſtward round its axis every 24 hours; the Moon makes *part* of a revolution in the time that the Earth makes *a whole* rotation: and therefore, the Earth muſt turn as much more than round its axis, before the ſame iſland can come even with the Moon again, as the Moon has advanced in her orbit during that interval of time.

N. You are right, *Eudoſia:* for, in the time of the iſland's revolving from *A* to *A* again (in the direction *A B C D A)*, which is 24 hours; the Moon moves from *M* almoſt to *o* in her orbit: and therefore, after the iſland has come round to *A* again, it muſt move on from *A* to *e*, before it can be in the middle of the tide of flood the next day, under the Moon, which will have then moved from *A* to *o*.

E. How long is the iſland in moving from *A* to *e*?

N. Full 50 minutes: and ſo much later are the tides every day than they were on the day before. The ſailors call it only 48 minutes; and it would be exactly ſo, if the Moon were 30 complete days and nights going round from change to change. But as the time is only 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 3 ſeconds, (at a mean rate) ſhe muſt move a little farther every day than ſhe would if ſhe took the full 30 days: and this difference is equal to about 2 minutes of time, of the Earth's motion on its axis.

E. Then as the Moon goes round her orbit, from change to change, in 29½ days (in round numbers), the iſland *A a* can only come 28½ times round from the Moon to the Moon again, in that time;

and conſequently, it can have no more than twice that number of tides of flood, at *a* and *c*; or 57 tides of flood, and as many of ebb, between change and change of the Moon.

N. You are very right: and conſequently, in two courſes of the Moon, from change to change, which is 59 days, 1 hour, 28 minutes, 6 ſeconds, there are only 57 double tides of flood, and as many of ebb.

E. This account of the tides would be extremely natural, and eaſy to be underſtood, if the Earth and Moon were continually falling toward one another. But ſeeing that the Moon's motion in her orbit gives her a centrifugal force, equal to the force with which the Earth attracts her, ſhe cannot fall toward the Earth at all. And, from what you told me, in our ſecond dialogue, about the Earth and the Sun, I ſhould think, that if the Earth itſelf did not deſcribe a ſmall orbit round the common center of gravity between it and the Moon, in the time the Moon goes round her orbit, the Moon's attraction would take the Earth away, as it could have no centrifugal force to balance her attraction.

N. Dear ſiſter, you cannot imagine how much pleaſure it gives me to talk with you on theſe ſubjects; on account of the proper inferences and applications you make.—The Earth and Moon do really move round the common center of gravity between them, every month: and it is *that* center of gravity that deſcribes the very orbit in which the Earth's center would move round the Sun in a year, if the Earth had no Moon to attend it.

E. You may thank yourſelf, *Neander*, for all thoſe inferences and applications; as they only reſult from your explanations, and leading me ſo gradually on, from one ſubject to another. But, pray how many miles is it from the Earth's center to the common center of gravity between the Earth and Moon? Undoubtedly *that* diſtance, compared with the Moon's diſtance from the Earth's center, muſt be in proportion to the quantity of matter in the Moon compared with the quantity of matter in the Earth.—If you will tell me how much greater the quantity of matter in the Earth is, than the quantity of matter in the Moon, I will try to compute how far the common center of gravity between them is from the Earth's center.

N. The Earth's quantity of matter is 40 times as great as the Moon's.

E. Very well.—And the Moon's mean diſtance from the Earth's center is 240,000 miles.—Now, I divide 240,000 by 40, and the quotient is 6000; which, I think, muſt be the diſtance of the common center of gravity between the Earth and the Moon, from the Earth's center: and that the ſaid common center of gravity muſt always be in a right line between the centers of the Earth and Moon; becauſe both theſe bodies move round it.—Am I right, brother?

N. Indeed you are: and, before we talk further about the common center of gravity between the Earth and the Moon, I will endeavour to illuſtrate this affair about the tides to you, in a different manner from what I have done. For I find, that even if I had intended to explain it by the falling of the Earth and Moon toward each other, you would have juſtly believed that I was miſleading you.

Here is a circular hoop (*Fig.* 2.) *ABCD*, of thin plate braſs.—You ſee it is very flexible: for, as I pull out the parts *A* and *C* to *a* and *c*, the parts *B* and *D* fall in to *b* and *d*; and the hoop becomes of the elliptical ſhape *a b c d*.

E. True;—and juſt like the ſhape of the ſurface *a b c d* of the water (in *Fig*. 1.), as affected by the Moon's attraction.

N. But, if I quit my hold of the hoop at *a* and *c*, it will return to its former circular ſhape *A B C D*.

E. I ſee it does, now you have left it at liberty.

N. And, if the Moon's attraction ſhould ceaſe (*Fig*. 1.), the waters *a b c d* would return, from their elliptical ſhape *a b c d*, to their former round ſhape *A B C D*.

O 2 *E*. Yes;

E. Yes; for they would run from the higheſt parts *a* and *c* to the loweſt parts *b* and *d*, till their ſurface was equally diſtant from the Earth's center *E*, all around.

N. Now, I tie the end *A* (*Fig.* 2.) of the ſtring *A H* to any part, as *A*, of the circular hoop *A B C D*, and take hold of the other end *H* of the ſtring with my hand. If I whirl the hoop round my head like a ſling, what do you think will happen?

E. Why; the hoop will endeavour to fly off, as a pebble in a ſling would do.

N. True; but do you think that all the parts of the hoop will then have an equal tendency to fly off?

E. Let me conſider—I think they will not. For, as the part *C* will go round your head in the ſame time as the part *A*, but faſter, becauſe it is further diſtant from your hand; I imagine that the part *C* will have as much more tendency to fly off than the part *A* has, as its diſtance from your hand is greater.

N. Exactly ſo, becauſe it will move ſo much faſter, as the circle it deſcribes is larger. Now obſerve, I whirl it round my head. What ſhape is it *now* of?

E. It is of the elliptical ſhape *a b c d.*

N. Yes, for the tightneſs of the ſtring draws out the ſide next my hand, from *A* to *a*; and the centrifugal force of the other ſide throws it out as far, from *C* to *c*. And now, if an inflexible circular ring (like the rigid Earth) *A B C D* ſhould lie upon the elliptical hoop *a b c d*, and turn 29 times and an half round the center *E*, in the time the hoop and circle were moved once round my head; would not any point, as *A*, of the circular ring, come ſucceſſively even with the higheſt parts *a* and *c* of the elliptical hoop, and with the loweſt parts *b* and *d* of it; as the iſland *A a* (*Fig.* 1.) comes to the high water at *a* and *b*, and the low water at *c* and *d*, by the Earth's motion on its axis?

E. It would. And I think that *Fig.* 3. is ſomewhat analogous to *Fig.* 2.

N. It is very much ſo; and now is the proper time to explain *Fig.* 3.

Let *A B C D* be the Earth, *M* the Moon, *O o* part of the Moon's orbit, and *G* the common center of gravity between the Earth and the Moon, round which both theſe bodies move, once a month; the Moon in the direction *O o*, and the Earth in the direction *E b*. By this motion, all the parts of the Earth will have a centrifugal force, or tendency to fly off in or parallel to the line *A E C:* and the centrifugal force of each part will be directly in proportion to its diſtance from the common center of gravity *G*; becauſe the ſpaces through which theſe parts move, will be reſpectively as their diſtance from *G*; that is, as the ſemi-diameters of thoſe circles which they all deſcribe in the ſame period of time. Thus, the centrifugal force of the point *A* will be as the line *A G*; the centrifugal force of the center *E* will be as the line *E G*; and the centrifugal force of the point *C* will be as the line *C G*; for the point *A* deſcribes the ſmall circle

A e f g A in the time the point *E* deſcribes the larger circle *E h i k E*, and in the time the point *C* deſcribes the ſtill larger circle *C l m n C*; which is in a month; and in that time, the Moon goes round her orbit *O o*.

The Moon's attraction at the Earth's center *E* exactly balances the Earth's centrifugal force at *E*; and conſequently retains the center *E* in the orbit *E h i k E*. But her attraction at *A* is greater than at *E*, and leſs at *C* than at *E*. So that where the Moon's attraction is greateſt, as at *A*, the centrifugal force is leaſt; and therefore, the exceſs of attraction cauſeth the waters to riſe, as from *A* to *a*, on the ſide of the Earth which is at any time neareſt the Moon *M*. But, at *C* (the ſide which is then fartheſt from the Moon) the attraction is leaſt, and the centrifugal force greateſt: and therefore, the waters will riſe as high from *C* to *c*, by the exceſs of the centrifugal force there, as they riſe on the oppoſite ſide from *A* to *a* by the exceſs of the Moon's attraction. Are you ſatisfied now, *Eudoſia*?

E. I was ſadly afraid, that the riſing of the tides on the ſide of the Earth which (at any time, by its motion on its axis) is turned away from the Moon, would be very difficult to account for. But you have made it juſt as plain, that they muſt riſe as high on the ſide of the Earth which is oppoſite to the Moon, as they do on the ſide which is under the Moon. Did you ever ſee this confirmed by any experiment?

N. Yes; I have ſeen Mr. *Ferguſon* do it, to the ſatisfaction of every obſerver, by a plain experiment in one of his machines, called the *Whirling Table*; and he is the firſt that ever did ſo. He has given a full account of it in his Lectures on *Mechanics*, *Hydroſtatics*, *Pneumatics*, *Optics*, with *the Uſe of the Globes*, and *the Art of Dialing*. In that book, there are plates of all his machines for the above purpoſes. I ſhall ſend for it from Mr. *Cadell*'s ſhop to-morrow, and make you a preſent of it, on account of the quick progreſs you have made in aſtronomy:

and then you can, by yourſelf, learn a courſe of experimental philoſophy.

E. Indeed, brother, you lay me under ſo many obligations, that I ſhall never be able to make you any proper return for them. But there is one thing, that I had almoſt forgot to aſk you. Pray, what is meant by the *Spring* and *Neap Tides?*

N. The Earth is ſo ſmall, in compariſon of its diſtance from the Sun, that the Sun's attractive force is nearly equal on all parts of the Earth: and therefore, there can be but little difference between the centrifugal force on the ſide of it which is next the Sun, and the centrifugal force on the oppoſite ſide. But ſtill there is ſome difference, as the Earth moves on in its orbit. And therefore, if the Earth had no Moon to attend it, there would be *ſmall tides* occaſioned by the Sun. Conſequently, when the Sun, Moon and Earth, are all in a right line (which they are at the time both of new and full Moon) their joint actions concur; and ſo raiſe the tides higher at theſe times than at any other: and thoſe are called the *Spring Tides*. But, when the Moon is in her quarters, her action on the tides is *croſs-wiſe* to the Sun's; for then the Sun is in a line with the *low-water*, and his action keeps the tides from falling ſo low there, and conſequently from riſing ſo high under and oppoſite to the Moon, as they would do by the action of the Moon, if the Sun did not diſturb them at all; and theſe are called *the Neap Tides*.

E. I underſtand you very well; and do ſee plainly, that a ſtraight line drawn from the Moon's center through the Earth's center, would be in the higheſt part of the tides on both ſides of the Earth.

N. You are a little miſtaken in that point, *Eudoſia*; which may be owing to its being ſo repreſented in the figures. But, I am ſure, you would not have been ſo, if you had remembered what I told you in our firſt Dialogue; namely, that all bodies which are put into a ſtate of motion will perſevere in that motion, till ſomething ſtops their courſe. If you put water into a baſon, and give it a little ſhake, and then ſettle the baſon ſuddenly, the water will riſe a little further, on the ſide to which you gave it the motion, after the baſon is ſettled again, than it did in the inſtant when you ſettled it. Pray, have you forgot your fall in the boat, when it ſtruck againſt the bank of the river?

E. I have not, brother; and the inference is plain.

N. It is: and therefore you know, that when the waters are put into a riſing ſtate of motion by the action of the Moon; they would riſe a little higher, if the Moon were annihilated at the inſtant of her being on the meridian, even of a place where ſhe was directly over head. But you are ſtill to conſider farther, that although the Moon's attraction at any place is greateſt when ſhe is on the meridian of that place, becauſe ſhe is then the neareſt that ſhe can be to the place on that day; yet her attraction at the place does not then ceaſe, but continues for ſome time after ſhe has paſt the meridian: and this continuance of attraction, though weaker, will cauſe the waters to keep on in their riſing ſtate, till the attraction juſt balances the tendency of the waters to fall back again.

E. I thank you, brother, for ſetting me right. But, pray, how long is the Moon paſt the meridian, when the water is at the higheſt?

N. If the Earth was covered all over with water, ſo as the two eminences of the tides at *a* and *c* might regularly follow the Moon; ſhe would always be three hours paſt the meridian of any given place, when the tide was at the higheſt at that place. But as the Earth is not all covered with water, and the different capes and corners of the land run out all manner of ways into the oceans and ſeas; the regular courſe of the tides is much interrupted thereby; and alſo by their running through ſhoals and channels. So that, at different places, the tides are higheſt at very different diſtances of the Moon from the meridian.

But, at whatever diſtance the Moon is from the meridian, on any given day, *at any place*, when the tide is at its height *there*, it will be ſo again on the next day, much about the time when the Moon is at the like diſtance from the meridian again.

E. You have quite ſatisfied me about the tides; and now I will go to my room and ſtudy *Ferguſon*'s Method of calculating the Times of New and Full Moons.

DIALOGUE IX.

On the fixed STARS, *and* SOLAR *and* SYDEREAL TIME.

Neander.

WHAT is the matter, ſiſter?—Surely you could not have gone to your room and returned, ſince you left me.

Eudoſia. I had ſcarce gone out of *this* room, when ſomething came into my mind, which was, that you promiſed me, ſome days ago, to demonſtrate that all the Stars are at reſt.——And leſt I ſhould forget it again, I now beg leave to remind you of it, if you have leiſure at preſent.

N. For *that*, I refer you to *Ferguſon*'s Aſtronomy: and, before you have read the firſt three chapters, you will not only be convinced that all the Stars are at reſt, but alſo that they are Suns to innumerable ſyſtems of planetary worlds, as our Sun is to its own ſyſtem of planets.

E. What! other Suns, and planetary worlds belonging to them! You amaze me!

N. The Deity is infinite in all his perfections: and as he has power enough to create and place Suns and worlds throughout the whole infinitude of ſpace, ſo he has goodneſs enough to induce him to do it. But now, if you pleaſe, I will tell you of ſomething which I did not think of before; namely, to inform you of the difference between *Solar* and *Sydereal Time*.

E. You ſpeak too learnedly for me juſt now, brother; and it is the firſt time you ever did ſo.

N. Solar time is the time meaſured by the Sun's apparent motion round the Earth; and Sydereal time is the time meaſured by the Stars in *their* apparent motion round it.

E. Now I underſtand you: and have often obſerved, that if any Star be ſeen, juſt as if it were over a neighbouring chimney, at any hour in the night; in a week afterward, the ſame Star is ſooner ſeen over the ſame chimney.

N. True: and in 365 days, the ſtars ſeem to have made 366 revolutions about the Earth; ſo that they gain one hour every 24th part of the year upon the time ſhewn by a well-regulated clock. And therefore, every Star comes almoſt four minutes ſooner to the meridian, every ſucceeding day or night, than it did on the day or night before. The real difference is 3 minutes, 55 ſeconds, and 54 ſixtieth parts of a ſecond. So that, if one clock ſhould be ſo well regulated as to ſhew the time to be XII at noon this day, and on the 365th day afterward; and another clock ſhould be ſo regulated as to ſhew the time to be XII every day or night when any given Star is on the meridian; the latter clock would gain

3 minutes 55 ſeconds and 54 ſixtieth parts of a ſecond upon the former, in each revolution of the ſame Star to the meridian.

E. What is the reaſon of *this?*

N. Much the ſame as *that* of the Moon's going round her orbit in leſs time than ſhe goes round from change to change, or from between the Earth and the Sun to the ſame poſition again: as I explained to you, by *Fig.* 1. of PLATE V. laſt Monday morning, in our Seventh Dialogue: And we may make the ſame figure do for the preſent ſubject. You remember I told you that the whole diameter of the Earth's orbit is but as a point, in compariſon to the diſtance of the Stars; which is the ſame as to ſay, that a globe of 190 millions of miles in diameter, which would fill the Earth's orbit, would appear no bigger than a dimenſionleſs point, if it were ſeen from any of the Stars: and the preſent ſubject will prove this to be true.

E. I am far from doubting the truth

of your word; but I ſhould be very glad to ſee the demonſtration.

N. Then, here it is. Let the Earth be in what part of its orbit it will, we always find the interval of time (by the beſt clocks that are made) between any Star's revolving from the meridian to the meridian again, to be equal throughout the whole year: which it could not be, if the Earth's changing its place, by a whole diameter of its orbit, bore any ſenſible proportion to the diſtance of the Stars. For then, if the hour and minute hands of a clock ſhould revolve exactly 366 times from XII to XII again (there being ſuppoſed to be 24 hours on the dial-plate) in the time of the Star's making 366 revolutions from the meridian to the meridian again; and the hands be ſet to the uppermoſt XII, when any given Star is on the meridian on the 21ſt of December; then, on the 20th of March afterward, when the hands were at the ſame XII as before, the ſame Star would be a little on the Eaſt ſide of the meridian, if the Earth's orbit were of any ſenſible bigneſs in proportion to the diſtance of the Star; and a little on the Weſt ſide of the meridian, when the hands were at XII on the 23d of September: but we never find any ſuch difference.

E. To me, your demonſtration is ſelf-evident.

N. Then, you are convinced, that when the meridian of any place has revolved from any Star to the ſame Star again, the Earth has turned *abſolutely* once round its axis; becauſe the ſame meridian has revolved ſo, as to be again parallel to any fixed plane, to which it was parallel before, when the ſame Star was upon it.

E. I am.

N. Very well, ſiſter.—now, in *Fig.* 1. of PLATE V. let *S* be the Sun, *ABCDE FG* one half of the Earth's orbit; let the circle *biklk* be the Earth at the top of the figure) and *ab* the meridian of London, which we ſhall ſuppoſe to be at *b*.

Let the ſtraight line *a b S* be produced onward, to five or ſix miles beyond the Sun *S*, as ſeen from *b*; and let a Star be placed at the farthermoſt end of that line. —Then, the diſtance of the Star from the Sun will be ſo great, that the Earth's orbit *A B C*, &c. will bear no ſenſible proportion thereto, if it were viewed from the Star; and therefore, to an obſerver on the Earth at *b*, the Star will appear as even with the line *d b*, when the Earth has got a quarter round its orbit from *a* to *d*, and the meridian *d b* parallel to the poſition it had at *a b*, as when the Earth was at *a* in its orbit: ſo that, let the Earth be in what part of its orbit it will, the Star will always be upon the meridian of the place *b*, when *that* meridian has revolved to the ſame parallel poſition again: which it will always do in the time of the Earth's turning *abſolutely* round its axis.

E. Undoubtedly it will.

N. Now, ſuppoſe the Earth to advance in its orbit from *a* to *b*, in the time that it turns once round its axis; and then, the *ſame* meridian *b b* will be parallel to the poſition it had at *a b*, when the Sun and Star were *both* even with it; or, as we ſay, upon it.

Then it is plain, that when the Earth is at *b*, and the meridian *b h* has revolved from the Star to the Star again, it muſt revolve further on, from *b* to *m* before it can go round from the Sun to the Sun again at *S*. And the arc, or part *h m*, of the Earth's circumference bears the ſame proportion to the Earth's whole circumference, that the arc, or part *a b*, of the circumference of the Earth's orbit bears to *its* whole circumference.

When the Earth is at *c* in its orbit, and the ſame meridian *c h* comes even with the Star the ſecond time, the meridian muſt revolve from *h* to *n* before it can be even with the Sun again, or the Sun be upon it the ſecond time.

When the Earth is at *d*, a quarter round its orbit from *a*, and the meridian *d h* is even with the Star; the meridian will want ſix hours of being even with the Sun in the right line *d o S*, and the place *b* muſt revolve ſix hours, or through the arc *b o* of 90 degrees, before the Sun can be on its meridian *d b*.

And conſequently, when the Earth has gone half round its orbit, the ſame meridian will be even with the Star 12 hours before it revolves to the Sun: and when the Earth has gone three quarters round its orbit, the meridian will be even with the Star 18 hours before it comes to be even with the Sun.

And laſtly, when the Earth has gone quite round its orbit, its rotation on its axis will have brought the ſame meridian once more round from the Star to the Star again, than from the Sun to the Sun again. —So that, let the year contain how many days it will, as meaſured by the apparent revolutions of the Sun from the meridian to the meridian again, it will contain one day more, as meaſured by the apparent revolutions of the Stars.

E. By this I find, that one abſolute turn of the Earth round its axis is loſt in a year with reſpect to the number of ſolar days in the year, becauſe the Earth's motion on its axis is the ſame way as its motion round the Sun. For, to bring any meridian round from the Sun to the Sun again, the Earth muſt turn as much more than quite round its axis, as bears a proportion to the ſpace it moves in its orbit in 24 ſolar hours. And therefore, to make the year contain 365 ſolar days and nights, the Earth muſt turn 366 times round its axis.

N. You are right, *Eudoſia.*—Now go to your aſtronomical tables and precepts; and try whether you can calculate the time of new Moon in July 1748 old ſtile.—If you find any difficulty, come and tell me of it.

E. I thank you, brother; and make no doubt but that I muſt ſoon ſee you again.

DIALOGUE X.

On the PROJECTION *of* SOLAR ECLIPSES; *to which*, ANSWERS *to ſome* ASTRONOMICAL QUESTIONS *are ſubjoined.*

Neander.

WELL, ſiſter;—you kept quite alone, all the time yeſterday after you left me: and as you did not return this morning before breakfaſt, as uſual, I ſent to enquire about your health: and the maid told me that you was very well; but ſo much engaged with your book and pen, that ſhe was almoſt afraid to ſpeak, for fear of diſturbing you, as you took no notice of her when ſhe came into your room.

Eudoſia. Indeed, brother, I have been very much engaged; and ſcarce took time to eat either dinner or ſupper.

N. So I obſerved: and now, pray, what have you been doing?

E. After looking a little at *Ferguſon*'s tables for calculating the true times of new and full Moons, and finding ſome expreſſions in the titles of the tables which I did not underſtand, namely, the *mean Anomalies* of the Sun and Moon; I read the former part of the 19th chapter of his book, in which I not only found *theſe terms* explained to my ſatisfaction; but alſo the *principles* on which the tables are conſtructed: and, on account of what you have already told me about the attractions of the Sun, Moon, and Earth, I think I underſtand the principles tolerably well.

N. I can very eaſily take your word for that, *Eudoſia*.

E. Having read the *Precepts*, and compared them with the tables and *examples* of *calculation*, I then tried to calculate the true times of ſome new and full Moons which are exemplified in the precepts; and finding my calculations to agree very nearly with *Ferguſon*'s examples, I tried to calculate the true time of new Moon in July 1748, old ſtile, as you deſired me; of which Mr. *Ferguſon* has given no example.—— And finding that the Sun muſt have been eclipſed at the time of *that* new Moon, I even *attempted* to take out the *elements* for projecting that eclipſe,

N. Then indeed, you muſt have done a great deal of work for the time you have been about it.—Pray, ſhew me your calculations.

E. I am almoſt afraid to do it;—but, here they are.

		day	h.	m.	s.
1.	The apparent time of new Moon at Greenwich, July in the Forenoon.	14	11	15	3
			°	′	″
2.	The ſemi-diameter of the Earth's diſc at that time, as ſeen from the Moon - - - - - -		0	53	32
3.	The angle of the Moon's viſible path with the ecliptic		5	35	0
4.	The Moon's latitude, North deſcending - - -		0	28	6
5.	The Moon's horary motion from the Sun - - -		0	27	17
6.	The Sun's diſtance from the neareſt ſolſtice - - -		32	42	40
7.	The Sun's declination, North - - - - - -		19	35	21
8.	The Sun's diſtance at noon from the vertex of London -		31	54	39
9.	The Sun's ſemi-diameter - - - - - -		0	15	50
10.	The Moon's ſemi-diameter - - - - - -		0	14	53
11.	The ſemi-diameter of the Penumbra - - - -		0	30	43

N. Well done, *Eudoſia.*——I calculated the ſame elements before I gave you the book; and now we will compare the calculations together.—All right;—for, do you ſee,—we have not differed three ſeconds in any part.—And I did not tell you till now, that I had made any ſuch calculation.

E. This gives me great pleaſure, indeed.—But, upon reading the method of projecting eclipſes, I often find mention made of a *Sector:* which I take to be a mathematical inſtrument; and, as you know that I am entirely unacquainted with any of theſe inſtruments, I am afraid I can proceed no farther, unleſs you will ſhew me a Sector, and teach me how to uſe it.

N. It is true, that by means of a Sector, theſe kinds of projections may be much ſooner made than without it—But, as I know you are yet totally unacquainted with mathematical inſtruments, I will now ſhew you how to project an eclipſe of the Sun, only by means of a pair of compaſſes and a common ruler: And then, you will be at no loſs about projecting any eclipſe of the Moon; which is much eaſier to be done than to project an eclipſe of the Sun.—I will firſt tell you ſome things, by which you will underſtand the reaſon why all the different parts of the conſtruction of a ſolar eclipſe muſt be as we lay them down; and then proceed to conſtruct the Sun's eclipſe which fell on the 14th of July 1748, as it appeared at London. You know, it is but a few days ſince you covered one of the panes of glaſs in the window of your room with gum water; and, when it was dry, you placed yourſelf about a foot from the glaſs, and, keeping your head ſteady, you delineated a landſcape on the glaſs, with your black-lead pencil, of all the diſtant objects which you ſaw through the glaſs, drawing them on thoſe parts of the glaſs which were juſt between them and your eye; as if the pencil had touched the objects themſelves.

E. I have often done ſo: then drawn them with ink (which the gum-water cauſes to ſtick), and then laid a paper over them on the glaſs, and traced them thereon with the black-lead pencil.

N. Now, ſuppoſe the Equator to be a viſible circle on the Earth, and that a circle is drawn through any place (as ſuppoſe London) parallel to the Equator: that the Earth had an axis put through it, projecting out a good way from its ſurface at each pole; and that there was a viſible line drawn perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic or Earth's orbit, which line would be called the axis of the ecliptic.

Imagine all theſe things would be viſible to an obſerver at the Sun; and ſuppoſe yourſelf to be there, holding a pane of glaſs between you and the Earth, and delineating the figure of the Earth thereon, with its axis, Equator, the circle parallel to the Equator paſſing through London, and the axis of the ecliptic. Then,

As the Earth turns round its axis from weſt to eaſt, the places on its ſurface would appear to you to move as from your left hand toward your right; and you would ſee London as moving over the Earth in the circle which is drawn through it, parallel to the Equator. And, when the Moon is new, and eclipſeth the Sun from any part of the Earth, you would ſee her between you and the Earth, as paſſing over it from left to right hand, the ſame way as it turns on its axis: and you would ſee a great part of the Moon's penumbra or partial ſhadow, all around her (as it were) like a dark browniſh ring, travelling with her over the Earth.

As the Sun ſhines round the North pole of the Earth, from the 20th of March to the 23d of September, you would ſee *that* pole all the while in the enlightened part of the Earth's diſc (or flat round ſurface, as it would appear to you; like as the Sun and Moon do to us): and, from the 23d of September to the 20th of March, the ſame pole would be hid from your eye-ſight, behind the viſible and illuminated diſc of the Earth; becauſe it is in the dark all that time.

If a ſtraight walking-ſtick be placed at a diſtance from you, and inclining either directly toward you or from you, it will appear to you to be upright: but, if it inclines either toward your right or left hand, you will perceive it to do ſo. Therefore, when the Earth's axis inclines either directly toward you or from you at the Sun, it will appear to you to be perpendicular to the plane of the Earth's orbit or ecliptic; and to coincide with the axis of that plane. But, when the Earth's axis inclines more or leſs ſidewiſe to the Sun, the northern half of it will appear to you to incline from the axis of the ecliptic, toward your right or left hand; and the ſouthern half to incline the contrary way from the axis of the ecliptic: for then, theſe two axes will ſeem to croſs each other in the middle point of the Earth's axis.

Now, as the Earth's axis really inclines 23½ degrees from a perpendicular to the plane of the Earth's orbit, and always keeps inclining to one and the ſame ſide of the Heavens, in the Earth's whole courſe round the Sun; it will appear in different poſitions of inclination to the axis of the ecliptic, as ſeen from the Sun, at different times of the year; the North pole being ſometimes toward your right hand from the axis of the ecliptic, and at other times toward your left hand from the axis of the ecliptic; conſtantly varying the apparent angle of its inclination, according to the time of the year.

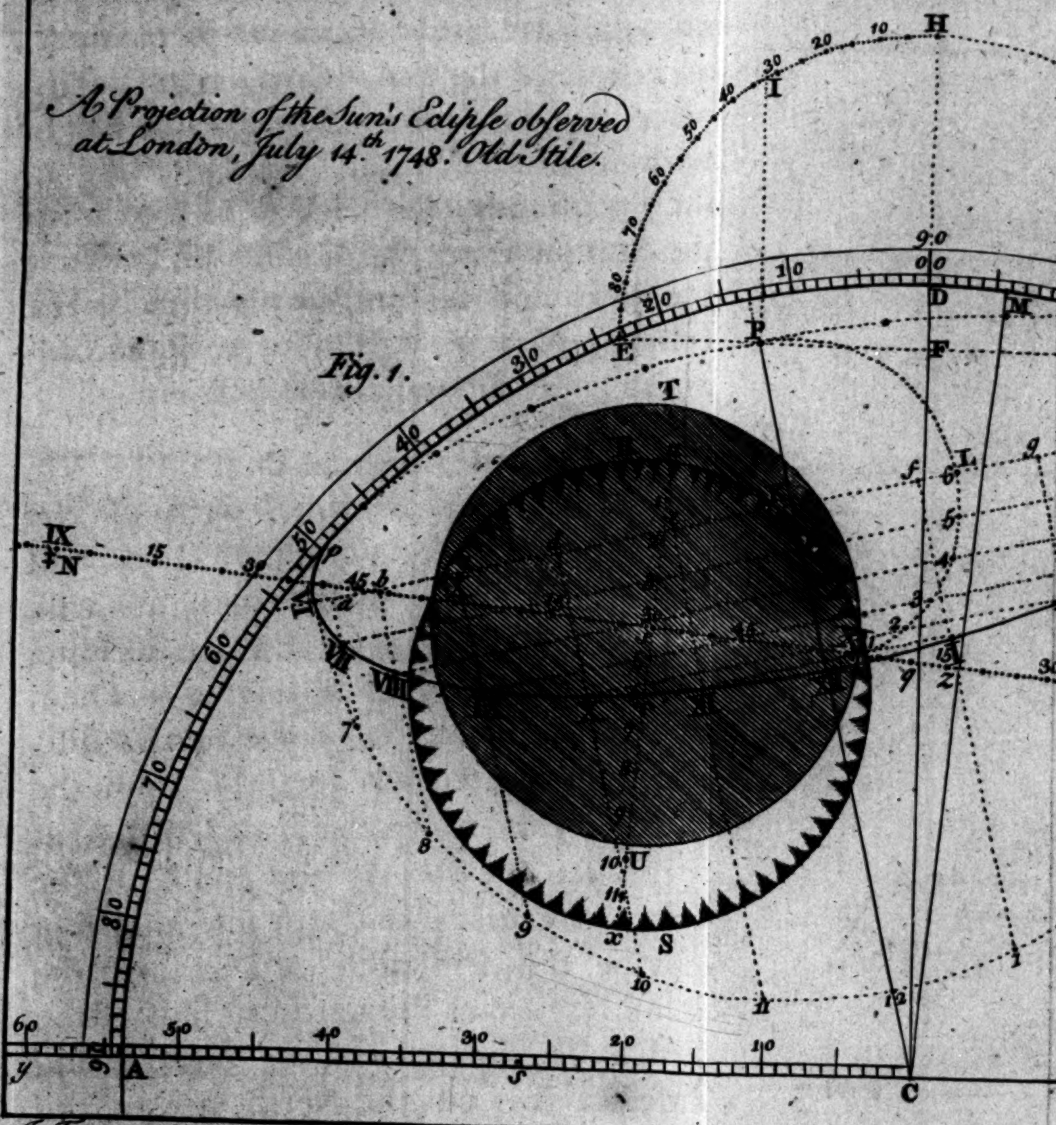
From the 21ſt of December to the 21ſt of June, the North pole of the Earth's axis lies toward the right hand from the axis of the ecliptic, as ſeen from the Sun; and moſt of all ſo on the 20th of March. From the 21ſt of June to the 21ſt of December, the North pole of the Earth's axis lies more or leſs to the left hand, as ſeen from the Sun; and moſt of all ſo on the 23d of September.

E. I wiſh you would be ſo good as to write down theſe matters for me when you are at leiſure; becauſe I am afraid I ſhall forget them.

Pl. VII.

A Projection of the Sun's Eclipse observed at London, July 14th 1748. Old Stile.

Fig. 1.



J. Ferguson delin.

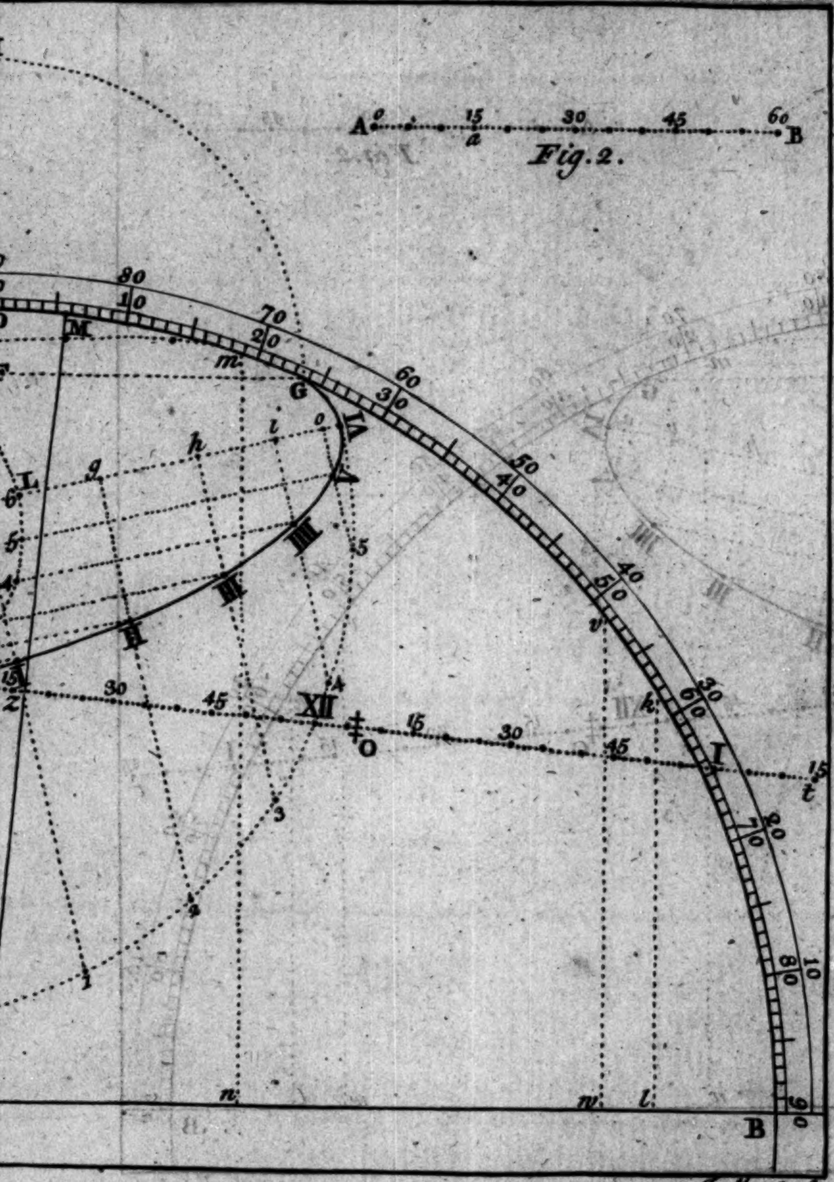


Fig. 2.

J. Mynde sc.

N. You may depend upon it that I will; eſpecially as they are the very principles on which we are now about to conſtruct an eclipſe of the Sun: which is, in the firſt place, by delineating a figure of the Earth, with its axis, Equator, *&c.* according to their poſitions as ſuppoſed to be ſeen from the Sun (or from the Moon juſt between the Earth and the Sun) at the time of the eclipſe. Now we will go to work, according to your calculated elements.

Make a ſcale, as *y A C* (PLATE VII. *Fig.* 1.) almoſt half the length of the paper intended for your projection, and divide it into 60 equal parts at leaſt, reckoning each part to be one minute, or a ſixtieth part of a degree.—Then, take the ſemidiameter of the Earth's diſc, 53 minutes 32 ſeconds (or $53\frac{1}{2}$), from the ſcale, in your compaſſes; and with that extent, ſet one foot in the end *C* of the ſcale, as a center; and with the other foot deſcribe the ſemicircle *A D B*, for the circumference of the northern half of the Earth's illuminated diſc or ſurface, becauſe we live on the North ſide of the

Equator: and continue the line *y A C* on to *B*; ſo *A C B* ſhall be a portion of the Ecliptic equal to the diameter of the Earth as ſeen from the Sun or Moon at that time.

From the center *C*, raiſe the line *C D H*, perpendicular to *A C B*; and call the line *C D H* the axis of the ecliptic.

Divide the quadrants *A D* and *D B* each into 90 equal parts for degrees, beginning at *D*. Then connect the points *E* and *G* (which are 23½ degrees on each ſide of *D*) with the ſtraight line *E F G*; in which line, the North pole *P* of the Earth's diſc will always be found.

Set one foot of the compaſſes in the point *F*, where the line *E F G* interſects the axis of the Ecliptic *C D H*; and, having extended the other foot from *F* to *E*, or from *F* to *G*, deſcribe the ſemicircle *E H G*, and divide its quadrant *H E* into 90 equal parts for degrees, becauſe the Earth's axis lies to the left hand from the axis of the Ecliptic, as ſeen from the Sun in the month July.—If the Earth's axis had lain to the right hand from the axis of the Ecliptic, the quadrant *H G* muſt have been divided into 90 degrees, and not the quadrant *H E*.

As the Sun is 32 degrees 42 minutes 40 ſeconds (which may be eſtimated 32 degrees and four-ſixths, or two-thirds, of a degree) from the neareſt (or ſummer) ſolſtice, which is the firſt point of Cancer, on the noon of the 14th July 1748, draw the right line *I P*, parallel to *H D*, from $32\frac{2}{3}$ degrees of the quadrant *H E* till it meets the line *E F G* at *P:* then, from *P* to *C*, draw the right line *P C*; ſo *P C* ſhall be the northern half of the Earth's axis, and *P* the North pole.

As the Sun is on the North ſide of the Equator in July, and conſequently nearer the point of the heaven juſt over London (or the vertex of London) than the Equator is; ſubtract his declination, 19 degrees 35 minutes (neglecting the 21 ſeconds) from the Latitude of London, 51 degrees 30 minutes, and the remainder will be 31 degrees 55 minutes for the Sun's diſtance from the vertex of London on the noon of July the 14th.

From the point *k* (in the right hand ſide of the ſemicircle *A D B*) at 31 degrees 55 minutes counted upward from *B*, draw the right line *k l*, parallel to *C D*: and taking the extent *k l* in your compaſſes, ſet it from *C* to XII on the Earth's axis *C P*. So, the point XII ſhall be the place of London on the Earth's diſc, as ſeen from the Sun, at the inſtant when it was noon at London on the 14th of July 1748.

Add the Sun's declination, 19° 35′, to the Latitude of London 51° 30′, and the ſum will be 71 degrees 5 minutes, for the Sun's diſtance from the vertex of London on the 14th of July at midnight. Therefore,

From 71° 5′, counted upward in the right-hand ſide of the ſemicircle *A D B* from *B* to *m*, draw the right line *m n* parallel to *C D*. Then, taking the extent *m n* in your compaſſes, ſet it from *C* towards or beyond *P* on the Earth's axis *C P*, as it happens to reach ſhort of *P* or beyond it: but in the preſent caſe, it reaches ſo little above *P*, that we may reckon *C P* to be its whole extent: and ſo, the point *P* ſhall repreſent the place or ſituation of London at midnight, beyond the illuminated part of the Earth's diſc, as ſeen from the Sun; and conſequently in the dark part thereof.

Divide the part of the Earth's axis between XII and *P* into two equal parts, XII *K* and *P K*: then, through the point *K*, draw the right line VI *K* VI perpendicular to the Earth's axis *C* XII *K P*.

Subtract the Latitude of London, 51° 30′, from 90° 00′, and there will remain 38½ for its Co-latitude.—Then, from 38°½, counted upward from *B* to *v* in the ſemicircle *A D B*, draw the right line *v w*; and, having taken its length in your compaſſes, ſet off that length both ways from *K* in the Earth's axis to VI and VI, in the line VI *K* VI.

Now, to draw the parallel of Latitude of London, or its path on the Earth's diſc, as ſeen from the Sun, from the time of

Sun-riſe till the time of Sun-ſet at London; proceed as follows.

The compaſſes being opened from *K* to VI, ſet one foot in *K*, and with the other foot deſcribe the ſemicircle VI 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 VI, and divide it into twelve equal parts, Then, from the diviſion-points (7 8 9, &c.) draw the right lines 7 *a*, 8 *b*, 9 *c*, 10 *d*, &c. all parallel to the Earth's axis *C P*, as in the figure.

Set one foot of the compaſſes in *K*, and with the other foot deſcribe the ſemicircle *P L* XII, and divide its quadrant XII *L* into ſix equal parts, as at the points 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; becauſe the Sun is on the North ſide of the Equator. If he had been on the South ſide of it, the quadrant *P L* (and not the quadrant XII *L*) muſt have been ſo divided.

Through the ſaid diviſion-points of the quadrant XII *L*, draw the right lines XI 1 I, X 2 II, IX 3 III, VIII 4 IV, and VII 5 V, all parallel to the right line VI *K* VI; and, through the points where theſe lines meet the former parallel lines 7 *a*, 8 *b*, 9 *c*, 10 *d*, &c. draw the elliptical curve VI VII VIII IX X XI XII I II III IV V VI; which may be done by hand, from point to point; and ſet the hour-letters to thoſe points where the right lines meet in the curve, as in the figure. This curve ſhall repreſent the parallel of Latitude of London, or, the path which London (by the Earth's motion on its axis) appears to deſcribe on the Earth's diſc, as ſeen from the Sun on the 14th of July, from VI in the morning till VI at night: and the points VI, VII, VIII, IX, &c. in the curve ſhall be the points of the diſc where London would be at each of theſe hours reſpectively, as ſeen from the Sun. If the Sun's declination had been as far South as it was North, the dotted curve VI *P M* VI would have been the path of London; which muſt have been found by dividing the quadrant *P L*, into ſix equal parts, and drawing lines parallel to VI *K* VI between that line and the pole *P*, and continuing the lines 7*a*, 8*b*, 9*c*, &c. till they met the foreſaid parallel lines drawn through the diviſion-points of the quadrant *P L.*—The points *p* and *G*, where the elliptical curve touch the circumference of the diſc, denote the inſtants of the Sun's riſing and ſetting at London: for, when London is at *p*, it will be juſt entering into the enlightened part of the Earth; and going into the dark, when it is at *G*.

From the point *M*, *viz.* 5 degrees 35 minutes to the right hand of the axis of the Ecliptic *C D*, draw the right line *M C* for the axis of the Moon's orbit, as ſeen from the Sun, becauſe the Moon's Latitude is *North deſcending*, on the 14th of July 1748.—If her Latitude had been *North aſcending*, the axis of her orbit muſt have been drawn 5 degrees 35 minutes on the left hand ſide of the axis of the Ecliptic.

Take the Moon's Latitude, 28′ 6″, from *C* to *s*, with your compaſſes, in the ſcale *A C*, and ſet that extent from *C* to *q* on the axis (*C D*) of the Ecliptic. —— Then, through the point *q*, draw the right line *N q O t*, perpendicular to the axis of the Moon's orbit *CzM*: and *NqOt* ſhall be the path of the center of the Moon's ſhadow over the Earth; and will repreſent as much of the Moon's orbit, ſeen from the Sun, as ſhe moves through, during the time that her ſhadow or penumbra is going over the Earth.

From *C*, on the ſcale *AC*, take the Moon's horary motion from the Sun, 27′ 17″, in your compaſſes; and make the line *AB* (*Fig.* 2.) equal in length to *that* extent: and divide the ſaid line into 60 equal parts, for ſo many minutes of time.——Then, as the time of new Moon, on the 14th of July 1748, was at 15 minutes 3 ſeconds after XI o'clock, take 15 minutes (neglecting the three ſeconds) from *A* to *a* on the line *AB* in your compaſſes, and ſet them off, in *Fig.* 1. from the *middle point* between *q* and *z*, in the right line *Nqz O*, to XI in that line; becauſe the tabular time of new Moon is mid-way between the point *q*, where the axis *CD* of the Ecliptic and the axis *CM* of the Moon's orbit

cuts

cuts the line or path of the penumbra's center on the Earth.

Take the whole length of the line *A B* (*Fig.* 2.) in your compaſſes; and, with that extent, make marks along the line *N O* (*Fig.* 1.) both ways from XI; and ſet the hour-letters to theſe marks, as in the figure.——Then, divide each ſpace, from mark to mark, into ſixty equal parts or horary minutes, which ſhall ſhew the points of the Earth's diſc where the center of the penumbra falls, at every hour and minute, during its tranſit over the Earth.

Apply one ſide of a ſquare to the line of the penumbra's path *N O*, and move the ſquare forward or backward till the other ſide cuts the ſame hour and minute, as at *s* and *r*, both in the path of the penumbra's center and the path of London: and the *minute*, which the ſquare cuts at the ſame inſtant in both theſe paths, is the *inſtant* of the viſible conjunction of the Sun and Moon at London; and conſequently, of the greateſt obſcuration of the Sun by the

Moon; which, according to the projection, is at 30 minutes paſt X o'clock in the morning.

Take the Sun's ſemidiameter, 15′ 50″, in your compaſſes from the ſcale; and ſetting one foot at *r* as a center, in the path of London; with the other foot deſcribe the circle *R S* for the Sun, as ſeen from London at the time of greateſt obſcuration. Then, take the Moon's ſemidiameter, 14′ 53″, in your compaſſes from the ſcale; and ſetting one foot in the Moon's path at *s*, with the other foot deſcribe the circle *T U* for the Moon, as ſeen from London, when ſhe obſcures moſt of all of the Sun, during the eclipſe; which may be meaſured by a diameter line *u s r x* drawn acroſs the Sun through the points *s* and *r*, and divided into 12 equal parts for digits of the Sun's diameter; of which, according to the preſent projection, there are $9\frac{2}{3}$ digits eclipſed.

Take the ſemidiameter of the penumbra, 30′ 43″, from the ſcale in your compaſſes; and ſetting one foot in the path of the penumbra's center, direct the other foot to the path of London among the morning hours at the left hand; and carry that extent backwards and forwards, till both the points of the compaſſes fall into the ſame inſtant in both the paths; which inſtant will denote the time when the eclipſe began at London. Then, do the like among the afternoon hours; and where the points of the compaſſes fall into the ſame inſtants in both the paths, they will ſhew at what time the eclipſe ended at London.—Theſe trials ſhew that the beginning of the eclipſe was juſt at IX o'clock in the morning, and its ending at 7 minutes after XII o'clock at noon; as the compaſſes reach juſt from IX in the path of London to IX in the path of the penumbra's center; and from 7 minutes after XII in the path of London, to 7 minutes after XII in the path of the penumbra's center.——Thus, we have, at laſt, finiſhed the projection, and found what was wanted to be known from it.

E. The whole proceſs is very pleaſant, but, I think, it is ſomewhat tedious.

N. That is, becauſe we have been obliged to divide the ſemicircle *A D B* and the quadrant *E H* with a pair of compaſſes.—If the Sector had been uſed, the labour would have been much ſhortened, becauſe we could have taken off all the meaſures directly from it; and ſo have avoided all the trouble of dividing, not only of the ſemicircle and quadrant, but alſo even of the ſcale.

E. I wiſh you would teach me how to uſe the Sector.

N. I will ſend to my mathematical inſtrument-maker, Mr. *Bennet*, in Crown-Court, near St. Ann's Church, Soho, for a complete caſe of mathematical inſtruments; and will make you a preſent of it, and inſtruct you how to uſe them before I leave this place. In the mean time, I will aſk you a few queſtions relative to the ſubjects we have been upon: and, if you can anſwer them cleverly, I ſhall not ſcruple to tell you, that you have made a very extraordinary progreſs.

E. I thank you, Sir, for your intended preſent and future inſtructions: and will anſwer your queſtions as well as I can *.

N. What would be the conſequence, if the Earth were fixed in any point of its orbit, ſo as to have no progreſſive motion therein; and to turn round its axis with its preſent velocity, having its axis perpendicular to the plane of the Ecliptic?

E. The ſolar, or natural day would be of the ſame length with the ſydereal day; which is equal to 23 hours 56 minutes 4 ſeconds of the time now meaſured by a well-regulated clock. The Sun would conſtantly appear to revolve in the Equator, days and nights would always be of an equal length at all places, either near the poles or far from them. And conſequently, there would be no different ſeaſons.

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* The ſubject of what is here put down, by way of queſtion and anſwer, was given by the author ſome time ago to a gentleman who has ſince publiſhed it, not without the author's leave, at the end of a printed book.

N. What would be the conſequence, if the Moon's diſtance from the Earth was ſuch, as that ſhe ſhould appear to be of the ſame magnitude with the Sun; that her orbit were circular, and lay in the plane of the Ecliptic; and that ſhe moved round the Earth in her orbit with her preſent velocity?

E. The Moon would always revolve in the plane of the Equator; and (ſuppoſing the Earth had no progreſſive motion in its orbit) the Moon would go round from change to change in the time ſhe now goes round her orbit, which is, in 27 days 7 hours 43 minutes 5 ſeconds. The diameters of the Sun and Moon would always appear to be equal. The Moon would eclipſe the Sun totally, for an inſtant of time, at all thoſe places over which the center of her ſhadow paſſed, which would be directly along the Equator. The eclipſes would be only partial on different ſides of the Equator, and never viſible at more than 2350 miles from it. The Moon would be totally eclipſed in the Earth's ſhadow at every time ſhe was full; and the durations of all her eclipſes would be equal.

N. What would be the conſequence, if the Moon's orbit acquired an elliptical form, ſuch as it is now of: that it continued in the plane of the Ecliptic, and the Earth had no progreſſive motion, but only turned round its axis as before?

E. The lengths of days and nights would be the ſame as above, and the times between the new or full Moons would remain the ſame. The Sun would be eclipſed (as above) at every change, and the Moon at every full; and the center of the Moon's ſhadow, when the Moon is new, would always paſs along the Equator. If the changes fell in that part of the Moon's orbit which is furtheſt from the Earth, the Sun would never be totally eclipſed; but would appear like a fine luminous ring all around the dark body of the Moon, at theſe places on the Equator where the Moon were directly over head at the inſtant of the change. If the changes fell in that part of the Moon's orbit which is neareſt the Earth, all the eclipſes of the Sun would be total at the Equator, for about four minutes of time: but if they fell in either of the two parts of the Moon's orbit, which are at a mean between thoſe parts which are at the greateſt and leaſt diſtance from the Earth, the eclipſes of the Sun would be juſt total for an inſtant of time at the Equator, and no where elſe. All the Moon's eclipſes would be total with continuance, as above.

N. Suppoſe now, that the Earth ſhould revolve about the Sun, with its preſent velocity, in the plane of the Ecliptic, its axis keeping always perpendicular thereto: that the Moon ſhould revolve as above, with her preſent velocity; and that her orbit ſhould remain always in the plane of the Ecliptic?

E. In that caſe, the days and nights would always continue (as above) of equal length; only the 24 ſolar hours would be 3 minutes 56 ſeconds longer than the 24 ſydereal hours, as they now are; but there would be no different ſeaſons. The Moon would go round her orbit in 27 days 7 hours 43 minutes 5 ſeconds; and round from the Sun to the Sun again, or from change to change, in 29 days 12 hours 44 minutes 3 ſeconds; as ſhe now does. The Sun would be eclipſed (as above) at every change, and the Moon at every full; and all the Sun's eclipſes would be central only at the Equator; but they would ſometimes be total there for four minutes, ſometimes total only for an inſtant, and at other times annular, according to the diſtance of the Moon from the Earth in different parts of her elliptical orbit at theſe times.

N. With the above circumſtances, relating to the Earth's progreſſive motion in its orbit, and the Moon's motion in her orbit; what would be the conſequence if the Earth's axis ſhould become inclined to the Ecliptic, as it now is; and the Earth turn round its axis with its preſent velocity?

E. We ſhould have all the variety of ſeaſons we now enjoy. The times between the new and full Moons would be the ſame as in the laſt anſwer above, and the eclipſes of the Sun and Moon the ſame. Only, the Sun's central eclipſes would not fall always at the Equator, but ſometimes on one ſide of it, and ſometimes on the other; that is, between the Equator and *that* pole of the Earth which was inclining toward the Sun at the time of the eclipſe.—In our Spring, the center of the Moon's ſhadow would go obliquely over the Earth, from the ſouthern tropic to the northern.—In ſummer, the ſhadow would begin to take the Earth at the Equator, and thence bend its courſe to the northern tropic, and from that tropic to the Equator again, where it would leave the Earth. In our autumn, the center of the Moon's ſhadow would go obliquely over the Earth, from the northern tropic to the ſouthern:——and, in winter, it would take the Earth at the Equator, from which it would bend its courſe to the ſouthern tropic, and go on obliquely from that tropic to the Equator, where it would leave the Earth. And, in each of theſe four caſes, the Sun's eclipſes would be central to all the parts of the Earth over which the center of the Moon's ſhadow paſſed; ſometimes total only for an inſtant, ſometimes total for four minutes, and at other times only annular.——The eclipſes of the Moon would be as above.

N. Suppoſing now, that the Moon's orbit ſhould become inclined to the Ecliptic, as it is at preſent, but that her nodes ſhould have no motion therein; and every other circumſtance ſhould remain as in the laſt queſtion?

E. Then, the Sun would never be eclipſed at more than 17 degrees from either of the nodes, at the time of any new Moon whatever; nor would the Moon be eclipſed at more than 12 degrees from either of the nodes at any time whatever of being full. So that we ſhould have but few eclipſes (as is now the caſe) in compariſon of the number of our new and full Moons. And the eclipſes would be confined to the ſame ſeaſons of the year; for there would be half a year between thoſe which happened about one node and about the other, becauſe there would be juſt half a year between the conjunctions of the Sun with one node and with the other.

N. Every thing remaining as above, excepting the ſtability of the nodes, and of thoſe two points of the Moon's orbit which are moſt and leaſt diſtant from the Earth: what would be the conſequence if theſe points acquired a direct or forward motion in the Moon's orbit, and her nodes a backward or retrograde motion; as they now have?

E. I believe, every circumſtance would be as it now is; and therefore we ſhould have all the variety of eclipſes that now exiſts in nature.

N. Well done, *Eudoſia!* ——You have anſwered all my queſtions to my mind:

which you could not poſſibly have done, unleſs you had very well remembered the ſubjects we have been upon, in all our Ten Dialogues. This, I think, may be our laſt on Aſtronomy; becauſe your applying to books will ſuperſede all neceſſity of our having any more.

E. But I am extremely ſorry, brother, to have heard yeſterday, that you are to ſet out for Italy in a few days, which is much ſooner than was expected. I ſhall miſs you ſadly;—and as you will probably be gone before I can read *Ferguſon*'s Aſtronomy quite through, I ſhould be glad to know whether you would have me to read any other book upon the like ſubject afterward.

N. By all means.——Here is Doctor *Long*'s Aſtronomy:—take it and keep it; for it will afford you a great deal of entertaining and pleaſing knowledge, eſpecially in the hiſtorical part.—You may ſkip over thoſe parts which are geometrical, as I ſhall not now have time to inſtruct you in that branch of ſcience. It is true, the volume is large; but I will anſwer for it, that by the time you have got to the end, you will wiſh it had been much larger, and that the Doctor would finiſh his ſecond volume.

E. Permit me, dear brother, to thank you moſt ſincerely for this valuable preſent.

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